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LIVING VOICES



LIVING VOICES

Selections chiefly from Recent Poetry

WITH A PREFACE

BY HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY



STRAHAN & CO.
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PREFACE.

I HAVE been requested to express the thanks of the Compiler of this volume to the many authors who have kindly granted her request to be allowed to publish selections from their works, and also to the other proprietors of the copyright of poems, who have accorded a similar favour.

I do not think they will have any reason to regret their kindness. It is of the very nature of such works as are here brought before us, that those who taste of their beauties in a judicious selection, are led to seek further acquaintance with the whole work, the fragments of which they have thus learned to appreciate. Moreover, Poets, of all men, are prodigal of their gifts ; they pour forth their thoughts for the benefit of all classes of men, under a species of inspiration which scarcely allows them to suppose that they can have any monopoly in their sayings, and every poet feels that it is the

crown of his august mission to have his sayings known amongst high and low alike as household words. It was, therefore, to be expected that the Compiler's request would meet with the kind response it has received, if those addressed were assured the selection would be judiciously made. On this point this book must speak for itself. The Compiler has been known before for other carefully-arranged selections in other walks of literature; and I believe it will be found that this volume manifests a real taste for the beauties it unfolds, and a real appreciation of what it is that gives such gems of poetry their value.

In an age busily occupied with matters practical, which often curb the soul's upward aspirations, any one does good service who encourages a taste for poetry, and opens an easier road for making every man familiar with its charms.

A. C. CANTUAR.

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SECTION I.

LOVE POEMS.

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B

THE EAR-RINGS.

My ear-rings, my ear-rings, I've dropped them in
the well,
And what to say to Musa, I cannot, cannot
tell;
('Twas thus, Granada's fountain by, spoke Albu-
harez's daughter).
The well is deep, far down they lie, beneath the
cold blue water:
To me did Musa give them when he spoke his last
farewell,
And what to say when he comes back, alas ! I can-
not tell.

My ear-rings, my ear-rings, they were pearls in silver
set,
That when my Moor was far away, I ne'er should
him forget;
That I ne'er should list to other lips, or smile on
other's tale,
But remember he my lips had kissed, pure as those
ear-rings pale.

When he comes back and hears that I have dropped
them in the well—
Oh ! what will Musa think of me, I cannot, cannot
tell.

My ear-rings, my ear-rings, he'll say they should
have been,
Not of pearl-drops and of silver, but of gold and
glittering sheen ;
Of jasper and of onyx, and of diamonds shining
clear,
Changing to the changing light, with radiance
insincere ;
That changeful minds unchanging gems are not
befitting well :
Thus he will think, and what to say, alas ! I cannot
tell.

He'll think when I to market went I loitered by
the way ;
He'll think a willing ear I lent to all the lads might
say ;
He'll think some other lover's hand among my
tresses noosed,
From the ears where he had placed them, my gems
of pearl unloosed ;
He'll think when I was sporting so beside this
marble well,
My pearls fell in ; and what to say, alas ! I cannot
tell.

He'll say I am a woman, and that we are all the
same ;
He'll say, I loved, when he was here, to whisper of
his flame,

But that, when he to 'Tunis went, my virgin troth
was broken,
And I thought no more of Musa, and cared not
for his token.
My ear-rings, my ear-rings, oh ! luckless, luckless
well ;
And what to say to Musa, I cannot, cannot tell.

LOCKHART.

SINCE THERE'S NO HELP.

SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me ;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies ;
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,—
Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to love thou might'st him yet recover.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

A.D. 1563.

THE DWINA.

I.

STONY-BROW'D Dwina, thy face is as flint,
Horsemen and waggons cross, scoring no dint,
Cossacks patrol thee and leave thee as hard,
Camp-fires but blacken and spot thee like pard,
For the dead silent river lies rigid and still.

II.

Down on thy sedgy banks picket the troops,
Scaring the night-wolves with carols and whoops,
Crackle their faggots of drift-wood and hay,
And the steam of their pots fills the nostril of day ;
But the dead silent river lies rigid and still.

III.

Sledges pass sliding from hamlet to town,
Lovers and comrades, and none doth he drown,
Harness-bells tinkling in musical glee,
For to none comes the sorrow that came unto me,
And the dead silent river lies rigid and still.

IV.

I go to the Dwina, I stand on his wave,
 Where Ivan, my dead, has no grass on his grave ;
 Stronger than granite that coffins a czar,
 Solid as pavement and polish'd as spar,
 Where the dead silent river lies rigid and still.

V.

Stronger than granite ? Nay, falser than sand !
 Fatal the clasp of thy slippery hand,
 Cruel as vulture's the clutch of thy claws,
 Who shall redeem from the merciless jaws
 Of the dead silent river so rigid and still ?

VI.

Crisp lay the new-fallen snow on thy breast,
 Trembled the white moon through haze in the west ;
 Far in the thicket the wolf-cub was howling,
 Down by the sheep-cotes the wolf-dam was prowling ;
 And the dead silent river lay rigid and still.

VII.

When Ivan my lover, my husband, my lord,
 Lightly and cheerily stepp'd on the sward,
 Light with his hopes of the morrow and me,
 That the reeds on the margin leaned after to see ;
 But the dead silent river lay rigid and still.

VIII.

O'er the fresh snow-fall, the winter-long frost,
 O'er the broad Dwina the forester crost,
 Snares at his girdle, and gun at his side,
 Game-bag weigh'd heavy for gifts for his bride,
 And the dead silent river lay rigid and still.

IX.

Rigid and silent, and crouching for prey,
Crouching for him who went singing his way,
Oxen were stabled, and sheep were in fold,
But Ivan was struggling in torrents ice-cold,
'Neath the dead silent river so rigid and still.

X.

Home he came never, we search'd by the ford ;
Small was the fissure that swallow'd my lord,
Glazy ice-sheetings had frozen above—
A crystalline cover to seal up my love
In the dead silent river so rigid and still.

XI.

Still by the Dwina my home torches burn,
Faithful I watch for my bridegroom's return ;
When the moon sparkles on hoar-frost and tree.
I see my love crossing the Dwina to me,
O'er the dead silent river so rigid and still.

XII.

Always approaching, he never arrives,
Howls the north-east wind, the dusty snow drives,
Snapping like touchwood, I hear the ice crack,
And my lover is drown'd in the water-hole black,
'Neath the dead silent river so rigid and still.

Russian Ballads, translated by Mrs. Ogilvie.

THE BRIDAL OF ANDALLA.

RISE up, rise up, Xarifa ! lay the golden cushion
down ;
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the
town.
From gay guitar and violin the silver notes are
flowing,
And the lovely lute doth speak between the trum-
pet's lordly blowing ;
And banners bright from lattice light are waving
everywhere,
And the tall, tall plume of our cousin's bridegroom
floats proudly in the air :
Rise up, rise up, Xarifa ! lay the golden cushion
down ;
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the
town.

Arise, arise, Xarifa ! I see Andalla's face,—
He bends him to the people with a calm and
princely grace ;
Through all the land of Xeres and banks of Guadal-
quivir
Rode forth bridegroom so brave as he, so brave
and lovely never.

Yon tall plume waving o'er his brow of purple
mixed with white,
I guess 'twas wreathed by Zara, whom he will wed
to-night.
Rise up, rise up, Xarifa ! lay the golden cushion
down ;
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the
town.

What aileth thee, Xarifa ? what makes thine eyes
look down ?
Why stay ye from the window far, nor gaze with all
the town ?
I've heard you say on many a day, and sure you
said the truth,
Andalla rides without a peer 'mong all Granada's
youth ;
Without a peer he rideth, and yon milk-white horse
doth go
Beneath his stately master with a stately step and
slow.
Then rise, oh rise, Xarifa ! lay the golden cushion
down ;
Unseen here through the lattice, you may gaze
with all the town.

The Zegri lady rose not, nor laid her cushion down,
Nor came she to the window to gaze with all the
town ;
But, though her eyes dwelt on her knee, in vain
her fingers strove,
And, though her needle pressed the silk, no flower
Xarifa wove ;

One bonny rose-bud she had traced before the
noise drew nigh,
That bonny bud a tear effaced, slow dropping from
her eye.
“No, no !” she sighs, “ bid me not rise, nor lay my
cushion down,
To gaze upon Andalla with all the gazing town.”

“ Why rise ye not, Xarifa, nor lay your cushion
down ?
Why gaze ye not, Xarifa, with all the gazing town ?
Hear, hear the trumpet how it swells, and how the
people cry !
He stops at Zara’s palace-gate—why sit ye still,
oh why ? ”
—“ At Zara’s gate stops Zara’s mate; in him shall
I discover
The dark-eyed youth pledged me his truth with
tears, and was my lover ?
I will not rise, with heavy eyes, nor lay my cushion
down,
To gaze on false Andalla with all the gazing town.”

LOCKHART.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR.

I.

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth ;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to earth !
Though earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

II.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot ;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not :
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved and long must love,
Like common earth can rot ;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis nothing that I loved so well.

III.

Yet did I love thee to the last
 As fervently as thou,
 Who didst not change through all the past,
 And canst not alter now.
 The love where Death has set his seal,
 Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
 Nor falsehood disavow :
 And, what were worse, thou canst not see,
 Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

IV.

The better days of life were ours,
 The worst can be but mine :
 The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
 Shall never more be thine.
 The silence of that dreamless sleep
 I envy now too much to weep ;
 Nor need I to repine
 That all those charms have pass'd away,
 I might have watch'd through long decay.

V.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
 Must fall the earliest prey ;
 Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
 The leaves must drop away :
 And yet it were a greater grief
 To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
 Than see it pluck'd to-day ;
 Since earthly eye but ill can bear
 To trace the change to foul from fair.

VI.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade ;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade.
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last ;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

VII.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed ;
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head ;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

VIII.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee !
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

BYRON.

BRIDAL BALLAD.

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow ;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now !

And my lord he loves me well ;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spake to reassure me,
And he kiss'd my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the churchyard bore me,
And I sigh'd to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie—
“Oh, I am happy now !”

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That *proves* me happy now !

Would God I could awaken !
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

EDGAR A. POE.

THE BRAES OF YARROW.

THY braes were bonny, Yarrow stream !
When first on them I met my lover ;
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream !
When now thy waves his body cover !
For ever now, O Yarrow stream !
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow ;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

He promised me a milk-white steed,
To bear me to his father's bowers ;
He promised me a little page
To squire me to his father's towers ;
He promised me a wedding-ring—
The wedding-day was fixed to-morrow ;—
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas ! his watery grave is Yarrow.

Sweet were his words when last we met ;
My passion I as freely told him :
Clasp'd in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him !

Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost,
It vanished with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow.

His mother from the window look'd
With all the longing of a mother ;
His little sister, weeping, walk'd
The greenwood path to meet her brother ;
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough,
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow !

No longer from thy window look,
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother ;
No longer walk, thou lovely maid,
Alas, thou hast no more a brother ;
No longer seek him east or west,
And search no more the forest thorough,
For, wandering in the night so dark
He fell a lifeless corpse in Yarrow !

LOGAN.

I HAVE BEEN WEEPING IN DREAMLAND.

I HAVE been weeping in Dreamland,
I dreamed that you were dead ;
I woke, and knew it was a dream,
Yet bitter tears I shed.

I have been weeping in Dreamland,
I dreamed you were untrue ;
I woke, but still my tears fell fast
For all that I could do.

I have been weeping in Dreamland,
I dreamed you loved me well ;
I woke, and could not choose but weep,
But why, I could not tell.

H. HEINE.

A YEAR'S SPINNING.

He listened at the porch that day,
To hear the wheel go on, and on ;
And then it stopped, ran back away,
While through the door he brought the sun.
But now my spinning is all done.

He sat beside me, with an oath
That love ne'er ended, once begun :
I smiled—believing for us both,
What was the truth for only one.
And now my spinning is all done.

My mother cursed me that I heard
A young man's wooing as I spun :
Thanks, cruel mother, for that word,—
For I have, since, a harder known !
And now my spinning is all done.

I thought—O God !—my first-born's cry
Both voices to mine ear would drown :
I listened in mine agony—
It was the *silence* made me groan !
And now my spinning is all done.

Bury me 'twixt my mother's grave
(Who cursed me on her death-bed lone)
And my dead baby's (God it save !)
 Who, not to bless me, would not moan.
 And now my spinning is all done.

A stone upon my heart and head,
 But no name written on the stone !
Sweet neighbours, whisper low instead,
 "This sinner was a loving one—
 And now her spinning is all done."

And let the door ajar remain,
 In case he should pass by anon ;
And leave the wheel out very plain,
 That HE, when passing in the sun,
 May see the spinning is all done.

E. B. BROWNING.

A LAMENT.

CHIDE not ; let me breathe a little,
For I shall not mourn him long ;
Though the life-cord was so brittle,
The love-cord was very strong ;
I would wake a little space
Till I find a sleeping-place.

You can go—I shall not weep ;
You can go unto your rest :
My heart-ache is all too deep,
And too sore my throbbing breast.
Can sobs be, or angry tears,
Where are neither hopes nor fears ?

Though with you I am alone
And must be so everywhere,
I will make no useless moan,
None shall say, “She could not bear ;”
While life lasts I will be strong,
But I shall not struggle long.

Listen, listen ! everywhere
A low voice is calling me,
And a step is on the stair,
And one comes ye do not see.
Listen, listen ! evermore
A dim hand knocks at the door.

Living Voices.

Hear me : he is come again—
 My own dearest is come back.
Bring him in from the cold rain ;
 Bring wine, and let you nothing lack.
Thou and I will rest together,
Love, until the sunny weather.

I will shelter thee from harm,
 Hide thee from all heaviness ;
Come to me, and keep thee warm
 By my side in quietness.
I will lull thee to thy sleep
With sweet songs :—we will not weep.

Who hath talked of weeping ? Yet
 There is something at my heart
Gnawing I would fain forget,
 And an aching, and a smart.
Ah ! my mother, 'tis in vain,
For he is not come again !

C. ROSSETTI.

MARY ANERLEY.

LITTLE Mary Anerley, sitting on the stile,
Why do you blush so red, and why so strangely
smile?

Somebody has been with you—somebody, I know,
Left that sunset on your cheek, left you smiling so!

Gentle Mary Anerley, waiting by the wall
Waiting in the chestnut walk, where the snowy
blossoms fall,
Somebody is coming there—somebody, I'm sure,
Knows your eyes are full of love, knows your
heart is pure.

Happy Mary Anerley, looking, oh, so fair !
There's a ring upon your hand, and there's myrtle
in your hair !
Somebody is with you now—somebody, I see,
Looks into your trusting face very tenderly !

Quiet Mary Forester, sitting by the shore,
Rosy faces at your knee, roses round the door—
Somebody is coming home ! Somebody, I know,
Made you sorry when he sail'd: are you sorry
now ?

A. J. MUNBY.

BARBARA.

ON the Sabbath-day,
Through the churchyard old and grey,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my
rustling way ;
And amid the words of mercy, falling on the soul
like balms,
'Mong the gorgeous storms of music in the mellow
organ-calms,
'Mong the upward-streaming prayers, and the rich
and solemn psalms,
I stood heedless, Barbara !

My heart was elsewhere
While the organ filled the air,
And the priest with outspread hands bless'd the
people with a prayer.
But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and
saint-like shine
Gleam'd a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes
on mine—
Gleam'd and vanish'd in a moment. Oh, the face
was like to thine,
Ere you perish'd, Barbara !

Oh, that pallid face !
Those sweet, earnest eyes of grace !
When last I saw them, dearest, it was in another
place ;
You came running forth to meet me with my love-
gift on your wrist,
And a cursed river kill'd thee, aided by a mur-
derous mist.
Oh ! a purple mark of agony was on the mouth I
kiss'd
When last I saw thee, Barbara !

These dreary years eleven,
Have you pined within your heaven,
And is this the only glimpse of earth that in that
time was given ?
And have you pass'd unheeded all the fortunes of
your race—
Your father's grave, your sister's child, your
mother's quiet face—
To gaze on one who worshipped not within a
kneeling-place ?
Are you happy, Barbara ?

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link
I bound around your happy arm while sitting on
yon brink ?
Or when that night of wit and wine, of laughter
and guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watch'd through
lattice bars
The silent midnight heaven moving o'er us with
its stars,
Till the morn broke, Barbara ?

In the years I've changed,
 Wild and far my heart has ranged,
 And many sins and errors deep have been on me
 avenged ;
 But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good
 I've lack'd ;
 I loved you, and above my life still hangs that
 love intact,
 Like a mild consoling rainbow o'er a savage
 cataract.

Love has saved me, Barbara !

O Love ! I am unblest,
 With monstrous doubts opprest
 Of much that's dark and nether, much that's
 holiest and best.
 Could I but win you for an hour from off that
 starry shore
 The hunger of my soul were still'd ; for Death has
 told you more
 Than the melancholy world doth know—things
 deeper than all lore.
 Will you teach me, Barbara ?

In vain, in vain, in vain !
 You will never come again !
 There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful
 fringe of rain,
 The gloaming closes slowly round, unblest winds
 vex the tree,
 Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and
 wounded sea :
 There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with
 death and thee.
 I am weary, Barbara !

A. SMITH.

THE BRIDAL OF DANDELLOT.

"Une grande dame de Lorraine, née Princesse de Salm, et veuve du Seigneur d'Asseuleville, jura qu'elle n'aurait d'époux que Dandelot, frère de Coligny. Tous les seins, fervents Catholiques s'y opposèrent en vain. En vain on lui montra que, ses terres étant sous les murs de Nancy, c'est-à-dire dans les mains du Duc de Lorraine et des Guises, elle ne pouvait même faire la noce qu'au hasard d'une bataille. Rien ne la détourna.

"Dandelot prit avec lui cent hommes déterminés et arriva à Nancy. En plein jour et à grand bruit la cavalcade s'en va au château de la dame. Au pont-levis tous tirent leurs arquebuses. De quoi tremblèrent les vitres des Guises, qui étaient en face, à peine séparés par une rivière. Cependant trois jours et trois nuits on fit la fête bruyante et gaie. Puis Madame Dandelot, montant en croupe derrière son héros, et disant adieu à ses biens, le suivit, pauvre et fière, au hasards de la guerre civile."—MICHELET'S *Guerre de Religion*.

SHE smiled, and said, " What good to hear
From Prince, and Duke, and courtly Peer
My beauty's praise ; what good to see
These silken gallants sue to me ?
Oh, not," she said, " for times of strife
The lays that charm a gentler life ;
A sweeter joy, a nobler pain
We ask than such as Trouveurs feign.

The lord I choose in days like these
Must be a Saint when on his knees,
A Hero in the field to dare,
A man, a leader everywhere !”
She paused, then spake it soft and low,
“I will wed none but Danelot.
My lands are broad, my mirror there
Hath oft-times told me I am fair ;
Yea, fain I am it should be so,
To bring the more to Danelot !”

“ And shouldst thou wed this Danelot,
What swords will flash, what fires will glow ;
A call, but not to feast or dance,
Thy wedding-peal will wake through France ;
Thy castles and thy lands that day
Will fall, the crafty Guise’s prey ;
And thou to Danelot will take
But ruin, famine, in thy wake.”
“ Yea,” said she, “ were it even so,
Yet would I wed with Danelot.
God’s open sky, so long o’ercast,
Must break in fiery sparks at last.
More sweet to draw the fearless breath
Of noble life, of noble death—
To pray to God where free men pray,
To watch by night, to arm by day—
Than in a gilded court to wear
The chain that slaves with tyrants share.”

The word she spake so soft and low
A bird hath ta’en to Danelot.
He hath not sent her ring or glove,
Or pledge of faith, or gage of love ;

He hath not sued for tress of hair,
Or picture next his heart to wear.
He called a hundred swordsmen true
And tried, as was the steel they drew,
Then gave the word, "Mount, mount and ride,
To dare the deed and win the bride."
"How fair," he said, "how sweet the flower
That opens when the storm-clouds lower !
And wilt thou, oh ! my love, take rest
Within a faithful wounded breast ?
Then shall it guard thee, shield, defend,
Till life and love together end."

As thick as thorns around the rose
Her castle stands begirt with foes,
Yet calm and free, like men who ride
For warlike pastime, or for pride,
With muskets raised, with vizors down,
They ride at Noon Day up the town ;
They cross the bridge, they mount the steep,
They ride within the castle-keep !
The sullen Guise beside her gate
Hath ground his teeth in rage and hate,
Three days to hear the clank, the din,
Of men-at-arms that dance within.
Three days, three nights, with feasting high
They spare not cheer nor revelry ;
And on the third day's noon again
Ride forth the hundred chosen men,
With one that on his steed doth bear
The lady dear, the lady fair,
Who spake it once so soft and low,
"I will wed none but Danelot."

DORA GREENWELL.

THAT DAY.

I stand by the river where both of us stood,
And there is but one shadow to darken the flood ;
And the path leading to it, where both used to
^{stand,}
Has the step but of one, to take dew from the
^{giant,}
One forlorn since that day.

The flowers of the margin are many to see ;
None stoops at my bidding to pluck them for
^{me,}
The bird in the alder sings loudly and long,—
My low sound of weeping disturbs not his song,
As thy vow did, that day.

I stand by the river, I think of the vow ;
The calm as the place is, vow-breaker, be
^{thou !}
I leave the flowers gazing, the bird unreproved ;
Would I trouble ~~thee~~ rather than ~~them~~, my be-
^{loved,}
And my lover that day ?

Go, be sure of my love, by that treason forgiven ;
Of my prayers, by the blessings they win thee from
Heaven ;
Of my grief—(guess the length of the sword by the
sheath's)
By the silence of life, more pathetic than death's !
 Go,—be clear of that day !”

E. B. BROWNING.

CHANGE UPON CHANGE.

FIVE months ago, the stream did flow,
The lilies bloomed within the sedge,
And we were lingering to and fro,
Where none will track thee in this snow,
 Along the stream, beside the hedge.
Ah, Sweet, be free to love and go !
For if I do not hear thy foot,
The frozen river is as mute,
The flowers have dried down to the root :
And why, since these be changed since May,
Shouldst *thou* change less than *they* ?

And slow, slow as the winter snow,
The tears have drifted to mine eyes ;
And my poor cheeks, five months ago
Set blushing at thy praises so,
 Put paleness on for a disguise.
Ah, Sweet, be free to praise and go !
For if my face is turned too pale,
It was thine oath that first did fail,—
It was thy love proved false and frail :
And why, since these be changed enow,
Should *I* change less than *thou* ?

E. B. BROWNING.

THE KISS.

“She died young !”

“I think not so ; her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.”

I COME to thee from one
Thou knowest of, I bear to thee her kiss :
“No bitter words,” she said, “when I am gone
Give thou, but only this.”

The mouth was well-nigh cold
I took it from, yet hath it power to bless :
The lips that sent it never moved of old
Except in tenderness ;

And ere they ceased to stir
They trembled, as if then they strove to frame
A word,—the only one ‘twixt heaven and her,—
Methought it was thy name.

They wore unto the last
A calm, sad, twilight smile, from patience won ;
Her face had light on it that was not cast
From joy’s long-sunken sun.

She waited for a word
 Of Love to stay on : Hope did long endure ;
 She waited long on Time, for she had heard
 His spells, though slow, were sure.

She waited ; but her stroke
 Was heavier than her groaning : one by one
 All failed her ; grief was strongest, so it broke
 Each thing it leaned upon.

She waited long on God,
 And He forsook not ; through the gloomy vale
 She leant upon His staff, until His rod
 Brake forth in blossoms pale.

Then did her spirit bless
 The gracious token ; then she saw the rife
 Salt-crusted standing pools of bitterness
 Spring up to wells of life.

And Peace, a friend for years
 Estranged, stood by her on her dying bed :
 See that thou weep not o'er her grave, *her* tears
 Have long ago been shed.

She grieves not for the mould :
 A heavier load lay long upon her breast
 Than Earth, which hath been to her far more cold
 In waking than in rest !

DORA GREENWELL.

I SPAN BESIDE OUR CABIN DOOR.

I SPAN beside our cabin door,
I watched him slowly cross the moor,
I smiled as I will smile no more,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

How many an evening as I sat,
With father he would come to chat,
He came for this, he came for that,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I watched him o'er the moor so wide,
He took the path that turned aside,
I went within the house and cried,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I saw him pass our cabin door ;
The world is wide, he came no more
I wept as I will weep no more,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I drew my wheel beside the fire,
I span as if I span for hire,
My father talked and did not tire,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

My heart is weary and my head,
And all is done, and all is said,
And yet it is not time for bed,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn.

DORA GREENWELL.

Adapted from an ancient Irish Song.

THE LAST WOOING.

“ O LAT me in, my bonnie lass !
It's a lang road ower the hill ;
And the flauchterin' snaw begud to fa',
On the brig ayont the mill.”

“ This is nae change-hoose, John Munro.”
“ I'll ken that to my cost,
Gin ye gar me tak the hill the nicht,
Wi' snaw on the back o' frost.

“ What hae I dune to vex ye noo ? ”
“ Last Wodensday at the fair,
Ye lichtlied me, tae side yer mou',
An' ye needna come nae mair.”

“ I lichtlied ye ? ”—“ Aboon the glass.”
“ Foul ta' the ill-faured mouth
That made the leein' word to pass.
By rowin' i' the truth.

“ It was but this : I dochtna bide
 To hear yer bonnie name
 Whaur muckle mou’s war opened wide
 Wi’ lawless mirth and shame.

“ And what I said was, ‘ Hoot ! lat sit,
 She’s but a bairn, the lass.’
 It turned the spait o’ words a bit
 And loot yer fair name pass.”

“ Thank ye for naething, John Munro !
 My name can gang or bide ;
 It’s no a sough o’ drucken words
 Wad turn my heid aside.”

“ O Elsie, lassie, be yersel’ !
 The drift hooes cauld and thrang ;
 O tak’ me in ae hour, and syne
 I’ll gaither me and gang.”

“ Ye’re guid at fleetchin’, John Munro,
 For ye heedna fause and true.
 Gang in to Katie at the Mill—
 She lo’es sic like as you.”

He turned his fit ; she heard nae mair.
 The lift was like to fa’ ;
 An’ Elsie’s hert grew grit and sair
 At sicht o’ the drivin’ snaw.

She laid her doon, but no to sleep—
For her verra hert was cauld ;
And the sheets war like a frozen heap
'O' snaw aboot her faul'd.

She rase fu' ear' ; and luikit oot ;
A' was ae windin'-sheet ;
At the door-cheek, nor at winnock-lug,
Was ever a mark o' feet.

She crap for days aboot the hoose,
Dull-fitit and hert-sair,
Aye keekin' oot like a frichtit moose—
But Johnnie wasna there.

Lang or the thow began to melt
The ghaistly waesome snaw,
Her hert was softer nor the thow,
Her pride had ta'en a fa'.

And whan the wraiths war halfins gane,
And the sun was blinkin' bonnie,
Oot ower the hill the maid wad gang,
To hear aboot her Johnnie.

Half ower, she cam' intill a den
O' snaw and slush and weet :
The Lord hae mercy on her hert !—
It was Johnnie at her feet !

Aneth the snaw his heid was smorit,
But his breist was maistly bare ;
And 'twixt his hert and his richt han'
Lay a lock o' gowden hair.

The warm win' blew, the blackcock flew,
The laverock was in the skies ;
The burnie ran, an' a bleatin' began,
But Johnnie wadna rise.

The sun was clear, the lift was blue,
The winter was awa' ;
Up cam' the green gerse plentifu',
The better for the snaw ;

And warm it happit Johnnie's grave,
Whaur gowden the ae lock lay ;
But on Elsie's heid white grew the lave
Or the barley's beard was gray.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

BESIDE THE STILE.

We both walked slowly o'er the yellow grass,
Beneath the sunset sky :
And then he climbed the stile I did not pass,
And there we said Good-bye.

He paused one moment, I leaned on the stile,
And faced the hazy lane :
But neither of us spoke, until we both
Just said "Good-bye" again.

And I went homeward to our quaint old farm,
And he went on his way ;
And he has never crossed that field again,
From that time to this day.

I wonder if he ever gives a thought
To what he left behind,—
As I start sometimes, dreaming that I hear
A footstep in the wind.

If he had said but one regretful word,
Or I had shed a tear,
He would not go alone about the world,
Nor I sit lonely here.

Alas ! our hearts were full of angry pride,
And love was choked in strife ;
And so the stile, beyond the yellow grass
Stands straight across our life.

L. FYVIE MAYO.

RHYME OF THE DUCHESS MAY.

To the belfry, one by one, went the ringers from
the sun,

Toll slowly.

And the oldest ringer said, "Ours is music for the
Dead
When the rebecks are all done."

* * * * *

There I sat beneath the tree, and the bell tolled
solemnly,

Toll slowly.

While the trees' and river's voices flowed between
the solemn noises,—
Yet death seemed more loud to me.

There I read this ancient Rhyme, while the bell did
all the time

Toll slowly.

And the solemn knell fell in with the tale of life
and sin,
Like a rhythmic fate sublime.

THE RHYME.

Broad the forests stood (I read) on the hills of
Linteged,

Toll slowly.

And three hundred years had stood mute adown
each hoary wood,
Like a full heart having prayed.

· And the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west,

Toll slowly.

And but little thought was theirs of the silent
antique years,
In the building of their nest.

Down the sun dropt large and red on the towers of
Linteged,—

Toll slowly.

Lance and spear upon the height, bristling strange
in fiery light,
While the castle stood in shade.

There the castle stood up black with the red sun
at its back,

Toll slowly.

Like a sullen smouldering pyre with a top that
flickers fire
When the wind is on its track.

And five hundred archers tall did besiege the castle
wall,

Toll slowly.

And the castle, seethed in blood, fourteen days and
nights had stood
And to-night was near its fall.

Yet thereunto, blind to doom, three months since,
a bride did come,

Toll slowly.

One who proudly trod the floors and softly
whispered in the doors,
“ May good angels bless our home.”

Oh, a bride of queenly eyes, with a front of con-
stancies,

Toll slowly.

Oh, a bride of cordial mouth where the untired
smile of youth
Did light outward its own sighs !

’Twas a Duke’s fair orphan-girl, and her uncle’s
ward—the Earl,

Toll slowly.

Who betrothed her twelve years old, for the sake
of dowry gold,
To his son Lord Leigh the churl.

But what time she had made good all her years of
womanhood,

Toll slowly.

Unto both these Lords of Leigh spake she out
right sovranly,
“ My will runneth as my blood.

" And while this same blood makes red this same
right hand's veins," she said,
Toll slowly.

" 'Tis my will as lady free, not to wed a lord of
Leigh,
But Sir Guy of Linteged."

The old Earl he smilēd smooth, then he sighed for
wilful youth,—

Toll slowly.

" Good my niece, that hand withal looketh some-
what soft and small
For so large a will, in sooth."

She too smiled by that same sign, but her smile
was cold and fine,—

Toll slowly.

" Little hand clasps muckle gold, or it were not
worth the hold
Of thy son, good uncle mine ! "

Then the young lord jerked his breath, and sware
thickly in his teeth,

Toll slowly.

" He would wed his own betrothed, an she loved
him an she loathed,
Let the life come or the death."

Up she rose with scornful eyes, as her father's child
might rise,—

Toll slowly.

" Thy hound's blood, my lord of Leigh, stains thy
knightly heel," quoth she,
" And he moans not where he lies :

"But a woman's will dies hard, in the hall or on
the sward,"—

Toll slowly.

"By that grave, my lords, which made me orphaned
girl and dowered lady,
I deny you wife and ward!"

Unto each she bowed her head and swept past
with lofty tread.

Toll slowly.

Ere the midnight-bell had ceased, in the chapel
had the priest
Blessed her, bride of Linteged.

Fast and fain the bridal train along the night-storm
rode amain:

Toll slowly.

Hard the steeds of lord and serf struck their hoofs
out on the turf,
In the pauses of the rain.

Fast and fain the kinsmen's train along the storm
pursued amain,

Toll slowly.

Steed on steed-track, dashing off,—thickening,
doubling hoof on hoof,
In the pauses of the rain.

And the bridegroom led the flight on his red-roan
steed of might,

Toll slowly.

And the bride lay on his arm, still, as if she feared
no harm,
Smiling out into the night.

"Dost thou fear?" he said at last: "Nay," she
answered him in haste,—
Toll slowly.

"Not such death as we could find—only life with
one behind.
Ride on fast as fear, ride fast!"

Up the mountain wheeled the steed—girth to
ground, and fetlocks spread,—
Toll slowly.

Headlong bounds, and rocking flanks,—down he
staggered, down the banks,
To the towers of Linteged.

High and low the serfs looked out, red the flam-
beaus tossed about,
Toll slowly.

In the courtyard rose the cry, "Live the Duchess
and Sir Guy!"
But she never heard them shout.

On the steed she dropped her cheek, kissed his
mane and kissed his neck,—
Toll slowly.

"I had happier died by thee than lived on, a
Lady Leigh,"
Were the first words she did speak.

But a three months' joyaunce lay 'twixt that
moment and to-day,
Toll slowly.

When five hundred archers tall stand beside the
castle-wall,
To recapture Duchess May.

And the castle standeth black with the red sun at
its back,

Toll slowly.

And a fortnight's siege is done, and, except the
duchess, none

Can misdoubt the coming wrack.

Then the captain, young Lord Leigh, with his eyes
so grey of blee,

Toll slowly.

And thin lips that scarcely sheath the cold white
gnashing of his teeth,

Gnashed in smiling, absently,

Cried aloud, "So goes the day, bridegroom fair
of Duchess May!"

Toll slowly.

"Look thy last upon that sun! if thou seest
to-morrow's one

'Twill be through a foot of clay.

"Ha, fair bride! dost hear no sound save that
moaning of the hound?"

Toll slowly.

"Thou and I have parted troth, yet I keep my
vengeance-oath,

And the other may come round.

"Ha! thy will is brave to dare, and thy new love
past compare,"—

Toll slowly.

"Yet thine old love's faulchion brave is as strong a
thing to have,

As the will of lady fair.

“ Peck on blindly, netted dove ! If a wife’s name
thee behove,”

Toll slowly.

“ Thou shalt wear the same to-morrow, ere the
grave has hid the sorrow
Of thy last ill-mated love.

“ O’er his fixed and silent mouth, thou and I will
call back troth ;”

Toll slowly.

“ He shall altar be and priest,—and he will not cry
at least,
‘ I forbid you, I am loth ! ’

“ I will wring thy fingers pale in the gauntlet of my
mail,”

Toll slowly.

“ Little hand and muckle gold’ close shall lie
within my hold,
As the sword did, to prevail.”

Oh, the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west,

Toll slowly.

Oh, and laughed the Duchess May, and her soul
did put away
All his boasting, for a jest.

In her chamber did she sit, laughing low to think
of it,—

Toll slowly.

“ Tower is strong and will is free : thou canst boast,
my lord of Leigh,
But thou boastest little wit.”

In her tire-glass gazèd she, and she blushed right
womanly :

Toll slowly.

She blushed half from her disdain, half, her beauty
was so plain,
—“Oath for oath, my lord of Leigh !”

Straight she called her maidens in—“Since ye gave
me blame herein,”

Toll slowly.

“That a bridal such as mine should lack gauds to
make it fine,
Come and shrive me from that sin.

“It is three months gone to-day since I gave mine
hand away :”

Toll slowly.

“Bring the gold and bring the gem, we will keep
bride-state in them,
While we keep the foe at bay.

“On your arms I loose mine hair ; comb it smooth
and crown it fair :”

Toll slowly.

“I would look in purple pall from this lattice
down the wall,
And throw scorn to one that’s there !”

Oh, the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west :

Toll slowly.

On the tower the castle’s lord leant in silence on
his sword,
With an anguish in his breast.

With a spirit-laden weight did he lean down
passionate :

Toll slowly.

They have almost sapped the wall,—they will enter
therewithal

With no knocking at the gate.

Then the sword he leant upon, shivered, snapped
upon the stone,—

Toll slowly.

“Sword,” he thought, with inward laugh, “ill thou
servest for a staff

When thy nobler use is done !

“Sword, thy nobler use is done ! tower is lost, and
shame begun !”—

Toll slowly.

“ If we met them in the breach, hilt to hilt or speech
to speech,

We should die there, each for one.

“ If we met them at the wall, we should singly,
vainly fall,”

Toll slowly.

“ But if I die here alone,—then I die who am but
one,

And die nobly for them all.

“ Five true friends lie for my sake in the moat, and
in the brake,”

Toll slowly.

“ Thirteen warriors lie at rest with a black wound
in the breast,

And not one of these will wake.

“ So no more of this shall be ! heart-blood weighs
too heavily,”—

Toll slowly.

“ And I could not sleep in grave, with the faithful
and the brave
Heaped around and over me.

“ Since young Clare a mother hath, and young
Ralph a plighted faith,”

Toll slowly.

“ Since my pale young sister’s cheeks blush like
rose when Ronald speaks,
Albeit never a word she saith—

“ These shall never die for me : life-blood falls too
heavily : ”

Toll slowly.

“ And if I die here apart, o’er my dead and silent
heart
They shall pass out safe and free.

“ When the foe hath heard it said—‘ Death holds
Guy of Linteged,’ ”

Toll slowly.

“ That new corse new peace shall bring, and a
blessèd, blessèd thing
Shall the stone be at its head.

“ Then my friends shall pass out free, and shall
bear my memory,”

Toll slowly.

“ Then my foes shall sleek their pride, soothing fair
my widowed bride
Whose sole sin was love of me :

“With their words all smooth and sweet, they will
front her and entreat,”
Toll slowly.

“And their purple pall will spread underneath her
fainting head
While her tears drop over it.

“She will weep her woman’s tears, she will pray
her woman’s prayers,”
Toll slowly.

“But her heart is young in pain, and her hopes
will spring again
By the suntime of her years.

“Ah, sweet May! ah, sweetest grief!—once I
vowed thee my belief,”
Toll slowly.

“That thy name expressed thy sweetness,—May of
poets, in completeness!
Now my May-day seemeth brief.”

All these silent thoughts did swim o’er his eyes
grown strange and dim,
Toll slowly.

Till his true men in the place, wished they stood
there face to face,
With the foe instead of him.

“One last oath, my friends that wear faithful hearts
to do and dare!”
Toll slowly.

“Tower must fall and bride be lost—swear me ser-
vice worth the cost!”
Bold they stood around to swear.

“ Each man clasp my hand and swear by the deed
we failed in there,”

Toll slowly.

“ Not for vengeance, not for right, will ye strike one
blow to-night !”

Pale they stood around to swear.

“ One last boon, young Ralph and Clare ! faithful
hearts to do and dare !”

Toll slowly.

“ Bring that steed up from his stall, which she
kissed before you all,

Guide him up the turret-stair.

“ Ye shall harness him aright, and lead upward to
this height ;”

Toll slowly.

“ Once in love and twice in war, hath he borne
me strong and far :

He shall bear me far to-night.”

Then his men looked to and fro, when they heard
him speaking so,

Toll slowly.

“ ‘Las ! the noble heart,’ they thought, “ he in
sooth is grief-distraught :

Would we stood here with the foe !”

But a fire flashed from his eye, ‘twixt their thought
and their reply,—

Toll slowly.

“ Have ye so much ‘time to waste ? We who ride,
here, must ride fast

As we wish our foes to fly.”

They have fetched the steed with care, and the
harness he will wear,
Toll slowly.

Past the court and through the doors, across the
rushes of the floors,
But they goad him up the stair.

Then from out her bower chamb're, did the
Duchess May repair :
Toll slowly.

"Tell me now what is your need," said the lady,
"of this steed,
That ye goad him up the stair?"

Calm she stood; unbodkined through, fell her
dark hair to her shoe;
Toll slowly.

And the smile upon her face, ere she left the tiring-
glass,
Had not time enough to go.

"Get thee back, sweet Duchess May! hope is
gone like yesterday."
Toll slowly.

"One half-hour completes the breach: and thy
lord grows wild o' speech—
Get thee in, sweet lady, and pray!

"In the east tower, high'st of all, loud he cries for
steed from stall:"

Toll slowly.

"'He would ride as far,' quoth he, 'as for love
and victory,
Though he rides the castle-wall.'

“And we fetch the steed from stall, up where
never a hoof did fall”—

Toll slowly.

“Wifely prayer meets deathly need : may the sweet
Heavens hear thee plead
If he rides the castle-wall !”

Low she dropt her head, and lower, till her hair
coiled on the floor,

Toll slowly.

And tear after tear you heard fall distinct as any
word

Which you might be listening for.

“Get thee in, thou soft ladye ! here is never a
place for thee !”

Toll slowly.

“Braid thine hair and clasp thy gown, that thy
beauty in its moan

May find grace with Leigh of Leigh.”

She stood up in bitter case, with a pale yet steady
face,

Toll slowly.

Like a statue thunderstruck, which, though quiver-
ing, seems to look

Right against the thunder-place.

And her foot trod in, with pride, her own tears
i' the stone beside,—

Toll slowly.

“Go to, faithful friends, go to ! judge no more
what ladies do,

No, nor how their lords may ride !”

Then the good steed's rein she took, and his neck
did kiss and stroke :

Toll slowly.

Soft he neighed to answer her, and then followed
up the stair

For the love of her sweet look :

Oh, and steeply, steeply wound up the narrow
stair around,

Toll slowly.

Oh, and closely, closely speeding, step by step
beside her treading

Did he follow, meek as hound.

On the east tower, high'st of all—there, where
never a hoof did fall,—

Toll slowly.

Out they swept, a vision steady, noble steed and
lovely lady,

Calm as if in bower or stall.

Down she knelt at her lord's knee, and she looked
up silently,

Toll slowly.

And he kissed her twice and thrice, for that look
within her eyes

Which he could not bear to see.

Quoth he, “Get thee from this strife, and the sweet
saints bless thy life !”

Toll slowly.

“In this hour I stand in need of my noble red-roan
steed,

But no more of my noble wife.”

Quoth she, " Meekly have I done all thy biddings
under sun ; "

Toll slowly.

" But by all my womanhood, which is proved so,
true and good,
I will never do this one.

" Now by womanhood's degree, and by wifehood's
verity,"

Toll slowly.

" In this hour if thou hast need of thy noble red-
roan steed,
Thou hast also need of *me*.

" By this golden ring ye see on this lifted hand
pardiè,"

Toll slowly.

" If this hour, on castle-wall can be room for steed
from stall,
Shall be also room for *me*.

" So the sweet saints with me be " (did she utter
solemnly),

Toll slowly.

" If a man, this eventide, on this castle-wall will
ride,
He shall ride the same with *me*."

Oh, he sprang up in the selle and he laughed out
bitter-well,—

Toll slowly.

" Would'st thou ride among the leaves, as we used
on other eves,
To hear chime a vesper-bell ? "

She clung closer to his knee—"Ay, beneath the cypress tree!"

Toll slowly.

"Mock me not, for otherwhere than along the greenwood fair

Have I ridden fast with thee.

"Fast I rode with new-made vows from my angry kinsman's house:"

Toll slowly.

"What, and would you men should reck that I dared more for love's sake

As a bride than as a spouse?

"What, and would you it should fall, as a proverb, before all,"

Toll slowly.

"That a bride may keep your side while through castle-gate you ride,

Yet eschew the castle-wall?"

Ho! the breach yawns into ruin and roars up against her suing,

Toll slowly.

With the inarticulate din and the dreadful falling in—

Shrieks of doing and undoing.

Twice he wrung her hands in twain, but the small hands closed again.

Toll slowly.

Back he reined the steed—back, back! but she trailed along his track

With a frantic clasp and strain.

Evermore the foemen pour through the crash of
window and door,

Toll slowly.

And the shouts of Leigh and Leigh, and the shrieks
of "kill!" and "flee!"

Strike up clear amid the roar.

Thrice he wrung her hands in twain, but they
closed and clung again,

Toll slowly.

While she clung, as one, withstood, clasps a Christ
upon the rood,

In a spasm of deathly pain.

She clung wild and she clung mute with her
shuddering lips half-shut;

Toll slowly.

Her head fallen as half in swoond, hair and knee
swept on the ground,

She clung wild to stirrup and foot.

Back he reined his steed back-thrown on the
slippery coping-stone;

Toll slowly.

Back the iron hoofs did grind on the battlement
behind

Whence a hundred feet went down :

And his heel did press and goad on the quivering
flank bestrode,—

Toll slowly.

"Friends and brothers, save my wife! Pardon,
Sweet, in change for life,—
But I ride alone to God."

Straight as if the Holy name had upbreathed her
like a flame,

Toll slowly.

She upsprang, she rose upright, in his selle she
sate in sight,
By her love she overcame.

And her head was on his breast, where she smiled
as one at rest,—

Toll slowly.

“Ring,” she cried, “O vesper-bell in the beech-
wood’s old chapelle—
But the passing-bell rings best !”

They have caught out at the rein which Sir Guy
threw loose—in vain,

Toll slowly.

For the horse in stark despair, with his front hoofs
poised in air,
On the last verge rears amain.

Now he hangs, he rocks between, and his nostrils
curdle in,

Toll slowly.

Now he shivers head and hoof, and the flakes of
foam fall off,
And his face grows fierce and thin :

And a look of human woe from his staring eyes
did go,

Toll slowly.

And a sharp cry uttered he, in a foretold agony
Of the headlong death below,—

And, "Ring, ring, thou passing bell," still she
cried, "i' the old chapelle!"

Toll slowly.

Then back-toppling, crashing back—a dead weight
flung out to wrack,
Horse and riders overfell.

Oh, the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west,

Toll slowly.

And I read this ancient Rhyme, in the churchyard,
while the chime

Slowly tolled for one at rest.

E. B. BROWNING.

MARILINE.

I.

AT the wheel plied Mariline,
Beauteous and self-serene,
Never dreaming of that mien
Fit for lady or for queen.

Never sang she, but her words,
Music-laden, swept the chords
Of the heart, that eagerly
Stored the subtle melody,
Like the honey in the bee ;
Never spake, but showed that she
Held the golden master-key
That unlocked all sympathy
Pent in souls where Feeling glows,
Like the perfume in the rose,
Like her own innate repose,
Like the whiteness in the snows.
Richly thoughted Mariline !
Nature's heiress !—Nature's queen !

II.

By her side, with liberal look,
Paused a student o'er a book,
Wielder of a shepherd's crook,
Reveller by grove and brook :

Hunter-up of musty tomes,
Worshipper of deathless poems :

Lover of the true and good,
Hater of sin's evil brood,
Votary of solitude,
Man of mind-like amplitude.

With exalted eye serene,
Gazed he on fair Mariline.

Swifter whirled the busy wheel,
Piled the thread upon the reel—
Saw she not his spirit kneel,
Praying for her after-weal ?

Like the wife of Collatine,
Busily spun Mariline.

III.

Hour by hour, and day by day,
Sang the maid her roundelay ;
Hour by hour, and day by day,
Spun her threads of white and grey.

While the shepherd-student held
Commune with the great of eld :

Pondered on their wondrous words,
While he watched his scattered herds,
While he stemmed the surging fords.
And he knew the lore of birds,

Learned the secret of the rills,
Conversed with the answering hills.

Like her threads of white and grey,
Paused their mingled lives away,
One unceasing roundelay—
Winter came, it still was May !

IV.

When the Spring smiled, opening up
Pink lipped flower and acorn-cup ;

When the Summer waked the rose
In the scented briar boughs ;
When the earth, with painless throes,
Bore her golden autumn rows—

Field on field of grain, that pressed,
Childlike, to her fruitful breast—

When hale Winter wrapped his form
In the mantle of the storm,
Tamed the bird, and chilled the worm,
Stopped the pulse that thrilled the germ ;

As the seasons went and came,
One in heart, and hope, and aim,

Cheered they each the other on
Where was labour to be done,
At daybreak or set of sun,
Like two thoughts that merge in one.

Dignified, and soul serene,
Busily span Mariline.

v.

Brightly broke the summer morn,
Like a lark from out the corn,—
Broke like joy just newly born
From the depths of woe forlorn,—

Broke with grateful songs of birds,
Lowings of well-pastured herds ;

Hailed by childhood's happy looks,
Cheered by anthems of the brooks—
Chants beyond the lore of books—
Cawing crows, instead of rooks.

Glowed the heavens—rose the sun,
Mariline was up, for one.

VI.

Like a chatterer tongue-tied,
Lo, the wheel is placed aside !—
Not from indolence or pride—
Mariline must be a Bride !

Fairest maid of maids terrene !
Bride of Brides, dear Mariline !

VII.

Up the meditative air
Passed the smoke-wreaths, white and fair,
Like the spirit of the prayer
Mariline now offered there :

Passed behind the cottage eaves,
Curling through the maple leaves :

Through the pines and old elm-trees,
 Relics of past centuries,
 Hardy oaks, that never breeze
 Humbled to their gnarly knees :

Forest lords, beneath whose sheen
 Flowers bloomed for Mariline.

Round the cottage, fresh and green,
 Climbed the vine, the scarlet bean,
 Morning-glories peeped between,
 Looking out for Mariline.

Odours never felt before
 Tranced the locust at the door,

Vieing with the mignonette
 Round the garden-parapet,
 Whose rare fragrances were met
 By rich perfumes, rarer yet,

Stealing from the garden-walks,
 Sentinelled with hollyhocks.

VIII.

What a heaven the cottage seemed !
 Love's own temple, where Faith dreamed
 Of the coming years that beamed
 On them, as pale stars have gleamed
 Through unnavigated seas,
 To which the prophetic breeze
 Whispered of a future day,
 When swift fleets would urge their way,
 Through the waters cold and grey,
 Like the dolphins at their play.

There the future Bride and he,
Prince of love's knight-errantry,
Whose good-shepherd arms must hold
His pet yearling of the fold,
Gift of God so long foretold,
Gift beyond the price of gold.

There the parents, aged and hale,
Passing down life's autumn vale,
With a joy as rare and true
As their daughter's eye of blue,
With such hopes as reach up to
Heaven's gate, when, passing through,
Peris, bound for higher skies,
Win the Celestial Paradise.

IX.

Thoughtfully stood Mariline,
Whitely veiled, and soul serene ;
Love's fair world for her demesne,
Never looked she more a queen—
With her maidens by her side,
Smiling on the coming bride.

Her pet lamb, with comic mirth,
Licked her hand and scampered forth ;
The fine sheep-dog, on the hearth,
Kindly eyed her for her worth.

X.

Up the air, across the moor,
As they left the cottage-door,

Chimed the merry village-bells,
Music wrapt the neighbouring fells,
Stirred the heart's awakened cells,
Like fine strains from fairy dells.

Past the orchard, down the lane,
By fresh wavy fields of grain,
By the brook, that told its love
To the pasture, glen, and grove—
Sacred haunts, that well could prove
Vows enregistered above.

By the restless mill, where stood,
Bowing in his amplest mood,
The old miller, hat in hand,
Rich in goodness, rich in land,
On whose features, grave and bland,
Glowed a blessing for the band.

Through the village, where, behind
Many a half-uplifted blind,
Eyes that might have lit the skies
Of Mahomet's Paradise,
Flashed behind the curtain's dyes,
With a cheerful half-surprise.

Through the village, underneath
Many a blooming flower-wreath,
Garlanding the arches green,
Reared in honour of the queen
Of this day of days serene,
Day of days to Mariline.

To the church, whose cheering bells,
Told the tale in music-swells—

Told it to the country wide,
With an earnest kind of pride—
Something not to be denied—
“Mariline must be a Bride !”

xi.

Up the aisle with solemn pace,
Meeting God there, face to face.
Never bride more chaste or fair
Stood before His altar there,
Her ripe heart aflame with prayer,
Blessing Him for all His care :
Every earthly promise given
Registered with joy in heaven.
From the galleries looked down
Village belle and country clown,
Men with honest labour brown,
Far removed from mart or town :
Smiling with a zealous pride
On the shepherd and his bride—
Playmates of their early days ;
For their walks in wisdom's ways,
Ever crowned with honoured bays
Of esteem and ardent praise.

xii.

Well done, servant of the Lord !
Grave expounder of His Word,

Who, in distant Galilee,
 Graced the marriage feast, that He,
 With all due solemnity,
 Might commission such as thee

To do likewise, and unite
 Souls like these in marriage plight.

With what manly, gentle pride
 The glad shepherd clasps his Bride !
 Love like theirs, so true and tried,
 Ever true love must abide !

XIII.

Ye whose souls are strong and firm,
 In whom love's electric germ

Has been fanned into a flame
 At the mention of a name ;
 Ye whose souls are still the same
 As when first the victor came,

Stinging every nerve to life,
 In the beatific strife,

Till the man's divinest part
 Ruled triumphant in the heart,
 And, with shrinking, sudden start,
 The bleak old world stood apart,

Periling the wild Ideal,
 By the presence of the Real :

Ye, and ye alone, can know
 How these twain souls burn and glow,

Can interpret every throe
Of the full heart's overflow,
That imparts that light serene
To the brow of Mariline.

SANGSTER.

THE VOICE OF THE FIRE.

They sat by the hearth-stone, broad and bright,
Whose burning brands threw a cheerful light
(On the frosty calm of the winter's night.

Her tresses soft to his lips were pressed,
Her head was laid on his happy breast,
And a tender silence his love expressed :

And ever a gentle murmur came
From the clear, bright heart of the wavering
flame,
Like the first sweet call of the dearest name.

He kissed her on the warm, white brow,
And told her in fonder words, the vow
He had whispered under the moonlit bough ;

And o'er them a steady radiance came
From the shining heart of the mounting flame,
Like the love that burneth for ever the same.

The maiden smiled through her soft brown eyes,
As he led her forward to sunnier skies,
Whose cloudless light on the Future lies ;

And a moment paused the laughing flame,
And it listened awhile, and then there came
A cheery burst from its sparkling frame.

In the home he pictured, the home so blest,
Their souls should sit in a calmer rest,
Like woodland birds in their shaded nest.

There slept, foreshadowed, the bliss to be,
When a tenderer life that home should see,
In the wingless cherub that climbed his knee.

And the flame went on with its flickering song,
And beckoned and laughed to the lovers long,
Who sat in its radiance, red and strong.

And ever its burthen seemed to be
The mingled voices of household glee,
Like the gush of winds in a mountain-tree.

Then broke and fell a glimmering brand
To the cold, dead ashes it fed and fanned,
And its last gleam waved like a warning hand.

They did not speak, for there came a fear,
As a spirit of evil were wandering near,
A menace of danger to something dear.

And, hovering over its smouldering bed,
A feebler pinion the flame outspread,
And a paler light through the chamber shed.

He clasped the maid in a fonder thrall :
“ We shall love each other, whatever befall,
And the Merciful Father is over all.”

BAYARD TAYLOR.

STILL IN MY PRAYERS AND IN MY DREAMS.

STILL in my prayers and in my dreams,
Though from my hourly thoughts exiled,
As heavenly bright thine image beams
As ever saint on hermit smiled.

I used to breathe thy name in prayer,
With human feeling warm and deep;
Now breathed as those that angels bear,
Where love is never taught to weep.

I used to dream thy hand in mine,
And waken with a longing pain;
But now the dream is too divine
To blend itself with earth again.

O early found and early lost !
Though on my course thou shinest now
No beacon to me tempest-tost,—
Still in my prayers and dreams art thou.

W. ALLINGHAM.



THE TEARS I SHED MUST EVER FALL.

THE tears I shed must ever fall—
I mourn not for an absent swain,
For thought may past delights recall,
And parted lovers meet again.
I weep not for the silent dead—
Their toils are passed, their sorrows o'er,
And those they loved their steps shall tread,
And death shall join to part no more.

Though boundless oceans rolled between,
If certain that his heart is near,
A conscious transport glads each scene,
Soft is the sigh and sweet the tear.
Even when, by death's cold hand removed,
We mourn the tenant of the tomb,
To think that even in death he loved
Can gild the horrors of the gloom.

But bitter, bitter are the tears,
Of her who slighted love bewails ;
No hope her dreary prospect cheers,
No pleasing melancholy hails.

Hers are the pangs of wounded pride,
 Of blasted hope, of wither'd joy :
The prop she lean'd on pierced her side,
 The flame she fed burns to destroy.

Even conscious virtue cannot cure
 The pangs to every feeling due ;
Ungenerous youth ! thy boast how poor,
 To steal a heart, and break it too !
In vain does memory renew
 The hours once tinged in transport's dye,
The sad reverse soon starts to view,
 And turns the thought to agony.

No cold approach, no alter'd mien,
 Just what would make suspicion start ;
No pause the dire extremes between,
 He made me blest—and broke my heart.
From hope, the wretched's anchor, torn,
 Neglected, and neglecting all,
Friendless, forsaken, and forlorn,
 The tears I shed must ever fall.

ANON.

“O LADY, THY LOVER IS DEAD,” THEY
CRIED.

“O LADY, thy lover is dead,” they cried ;
“ He is dead, but hath slain the foe ;
He hath left his name to be magnified
In a song of wonder and woe.”

“ Alas ! I am well repaid,” said she,
“ With a pain that stings like joy ;
For I feared, from his tenderness to me,
That he was but a feeble boy.

“ Now I shall hold my head on high,
The queen among my kind.
If ye hear a sound, 'tis only a sigh
For a glory left behind.”

GEORGE MACDONALD.

DORETTE.

The girls beneath the linden trees
Danced at the close of day;
My love was there—the summer breeze
Fluttered her ribbons gay,
And tossed her tresses, golden brown—
The saucy, sweet coquette !
The prettiest girl in all the town,
The cure's niece, Dorette.

I heard them chattering as they sped
Home through the moonlit street:
"Dorette will be the last to wed,
For all she is so sweet!"
"But love," methought, "will come one day—
Although he tarrieth yet—
For all your tricks he'll make you pay
A reckoning then, Dorette!"

All summer long I fished and sailed,
I thought of her no more!
A whisper came her cheek had paled—
I steered my craft inshore.
I landed—twixt the port and town
The cure's niece I met.
That night before the sun went down,
She was my own Dorette!

G. FOREST.

KUNEGUNDA.

THE crescent moon is sailing through the ether,
Convoy'd by fleets of stars upon her way:
Whilst wrapt in slumber deep the earth beneath
her
Is sleeping off the fever of the day.

No sound is heard upon the lake-side, only
The lazy water lapping midst the weeds,
And night winds with a murmur sad and lonely
Sighing soft music through the border reeds.

But hark ! what is that sudden strain that swelleth
So soft and low upon the midnight air ?
The voice seems full of tears, and sweetly telleth
Of love unspeakable, and love's despair.

"As an angel thou art fair,
And the meshes of thy hair
Round me weave a golden snare,
Kunegunda,
Kunegunda.

" And the glory of thine eyes,
Like a glamour on me lies,
And my heart within me dies,
Kunegunda,
Kunegunda.

"Thou art high exceedingly,
Kunegunda:

I am poor, of no degree,
Only rich in loving thee.

Kunegunda."

The singer little knows midst yonder myrtles
That there are list'ners to the song he weaves ;
He does not see the flow of women's kirtles,
The gems like fireflies flashing through the leaves.

He sees not her who parts the leaves asunder,
And listens with soft rapture-speaking eyes:
It is the maiden queen, fair Kunegunda,
Who tries to catch the words, but vainly tries.

"I fain would know the purport of his singing:
My maidens, wait for me a little space."
And like a wild roe o'er the daisies springing,
She gain'd unmark'd the minstrel's resting-place.

"Thou my boldness ne'er canst blame,
Kunegunda.

"Only when the night winds blow,
Kunegunda,

Dare I name it soft and low,
They alone my secret know,
Kunegunda.

"They are kind, for they reply,
Kunegunda,

To my sighing—sigh for sigh.
I must love thee or I die,

Kunegunda."

With finger to her parted lips she listen'd
To drink the melting accents as they fell,
And soon sweet tears upon her eyelids glisten'd,
To learn that she was loved so passing well.

"This is the love for which my heart is yearning—
A love for my own self, and nothing more."
And bending down, her cheeks with blushes
burning,
She whispered, "Live, and love me, Trou-
badour!"

ANON.

MY LADY SLEEPS.

Stars of the summer night !
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light !
She sleeps, my lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

Moon of the summer night !
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light !
She sleeps, my lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

Wind of the summer night !
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light !
She sleeps, my lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

Dreams of the summer night !
Tell her her lover keeps
Watch, while in slumber light
She sleeps, my lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

LONGFELLOW.

O SWALLOW, SWALLOW! FLYING, FLYING SOUTH.

O Swallow, Swallow! flying, flying south,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow! if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O were I thou, that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her and pipe and woo her, and make her
mine.
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

TENNYSON.



FINETTE.

FINETTE was young, Finette was fair,
And never a lover had she ;
Finette she cried, in her young despair,
“ ‘Twere better we never should be ;
The dance will go, and it irks me so,
Here by the lonely tree.”

Gerôme was hale, but Gerôme was pale,
For a lover he fain would be,
And he would not know, though they told him so,
That the maiden he chose was free ;
So Gerôme he stood in the dusky wood,
And a sorrowful wight was he.

Finette she said, as she raised her head,
“ Somebody watches for me.”
Gerôme he said, with a lofty head,
“ My lady is looking for me.”
Gerôme came one, and Finette came two,
Two little steps half-way ;
Gerôme he sighed, and Finette she cried,
But never a tear had they.
The dance is done, but the game is won,
Merrily ends the day.

SADIE.

GOOD - BYE.

(GREGORY.)

Go, light of life, thou hast my heart's deep blessing,
A whispered prayer, too fervent far to speak ;
Each sighing breeze shall be a mute caressing,
An earnest of my love, so strong, so weak ;
So strong, that by its power my spirit trembleth
At thine approach, within its inmost core ;
So weak that nothing greater it resembleth
Than little ripples heard in ocean's roar.
It cannot change the things which bid us sever,
No matter at what cost of bleeding pain,
Which break the links which bound us so together,
And bid us sail apart upon life's main.
Yet better so than constantly to meet thee
As light acquaintance, little loved or known,
To crush my heart that so it might not greet thee
In hand to hand, or word, or look, or tone.
There is no need of any sigh or token
That thou wilt not forget our olden love :
I am as sure of that which thou hast spoken
As though it came on sunbeams from above.
Thine eyes must not be dim with tears, yet, dearest ;
Thy last look should be sunshine, breathe no sigh :
Thy head must rest once more where thou art
nearest—
Upon my heart, and then good-bye, good-bye.

THE REPLY.

(MARGARET.)

I CANNOT speak, we grow so dumb with sorrow ;
I cannot look, mine eyes are blind with tears ;
I cannot say, " We meet again to-morrow ;"
I cannot gaze along the weary years.

" Good-bye, good-bye," the autumn air is sighing ;
The very flowers droop in sadness sweet ;
Upon the hills a purple pall is lying,
The stealthy waves creep up unto my feet.

O cruel waves, to bear away my gladness !
O stedfast rock, to rest my hand upon !
O traitress heart, to melt away in sadness !
O dazzling sunbeams, would ye never shone !

O little bloom of fragile, faithful heather !
Come, let me press my burning lips on you ;
Come, teach me how to bear this stress of weather,
And give my parchèd tongue a sense of dew !

Mine eyes, my poor wet eyes, are aching, aching ;
The heavy tears lie scorching on my cheek ;
My heart is hungry, weary,—is it breaking ?
Good-bye, good-bye, I cannot, cannot speak.

SADIE.

NEVER AGAIN.

NEVER again to touch my hand in greeting,
Never again to lay your lips on mine.
Was it in Paradise joy grew so fleeting ?
Was the world old when Eve did all resign.
Poor resignation, gone past all retaining,
Poor resignation, gone past all regaining.

Never again to know I need but live,
Just be myself, and one would count it blessing ;
Carelessly, as the birds their carols give,
Joyously, as a child receives caressing.
Never again the bliss of gladness giving,
Never again the life of perfect living.

Never again ; between us lies all heaven,
Only by God's great hand I reach you, friend ;
All other ways are marred with evil leaven,
All other ways to ill and sorrow tend.
Never again ; thou shalt not hear my weeping,
Never again,—Christ hold thee in his keeping !

SADIE.

A WAYSIDE WHISPER.

SEVEN years I served for you,
 To Love, our Lord of Life,
Ere He made me a master,
 And I won you for my wife ;
So faithfully, so fondly,
 Through a world of doubts and fears,
Seven long years, beloved !
 Seven long years.

Seven years you beaconed me,
 My leading, crowning star,
To climb the mount of manhood,
 And you drew me from afar ;
You made my grey hours golden,
 You glittered through my tears,
Seven long years, beloved !
 Seven long years.

Sometimes you shined so near me,
 Far as we dwelt apart,
I hardly sought you with my arms,
 You were so safe at heart.

Living Voices.

Sometimes you dwined so distant,
I bowed with solemn fears—
Seven long years, beloved !
 Seven long years.

I built my arch of triumph
For you to ride through ;
I kept my lamps all lighted
That the warring winds out-blew ;
I worked and I waited,
And I fought down my fears,
Seven long years, beloved !
 Seven long years.

Now the perils are all over,
And the pains all past,
My fortune's wheel full circle comes
In your dear eyes at last !
For such a prize the winning
Most brief and poor appears,
Yet 'twas seven long years, beloved !
 Seven long years.

GERALD MASSEY.

A NEW YEAR'S BURDEN.

ALONG the grass sweet airs are blown
Our way, this day in spring.
Of all the songs that we have known
Now which one shall we sing?
Not that, my love—ah, no!
Not this, my love?—why so?
Yet both were ours, but hours will come and go.

The grove is all a full frail mist,
The new year sucks the sun.
Of all the kisses that we kissed
Now which shall be the one?
Not that, my love—ah, no!
Not this, my love?—heigh ho!
For all the sweets that all the winds can blow.

The branches cross above our eyes,
The skies are in a net,
And what's the thing beneath the skies
We two would most forget?
Not birth, my love—no, no!
Not death, my love—no, no!
The love once ours, but ours long hours ago!

D. G. ROSSETTI.

IN A YEAR.

NEVER any more.
While I live,
Need I hope to see his face
As before.
Once his love grown chill,
Mine may strive :
Bitterly we re-embrace—
Singic still.

Was it something said—
Something done
Vexed him? Was it touch of hand,
Turn of head?
Strange that very way
Love begun.
I as little understand
Love's decay.

When I sowed at dress,
I recall
How he looked as if I sung
Sweetly too
Till I spoke a word,
I rose a bit
Till his cheek the colour strong,
Then he heard

Sitting by my side,
At my feet,
So he breathed the air I breathed,
Satisfied !
I, too, at love's brim
Touched the sweet.
I would die if death bequeathed,
Sweet to him.

“ Speak, I love thee best !”
He exclaimed.
“ Let thy love my own foretell,”
I confessed :
“ Clasp thy heart on mine
Now unblamed,
Since upon thy soul as well,
Hangeth mine !”

Was it wrong to own,
Being truth ?
Why should all the giving prove
His alone ?
I had wealth and ease,
Beauty, youth—
Since my lover gave me love,
I gave these.

That was all I meant,
To be just ;
And the passion I had raised
To content.
Since he chose to change
Gold for dust,
If I gave him what he praised
Was it strange ?

Would he loved me yet
On and on,
While I found some way undreamed—
Paid my debt !
Gave more life and more,
Till all gone,
He should smile, “ She never seemed
Mine before.

“ What she felt the while,
Must I think ?
Love’s so different with us men,”
He should smile.
“ Dying for my sake—
White and pink !
Can’t we touch these bubbles, then,
But they break ?”

Dear, the pang is brief—
Do thy part,
Have thy pleasure. How perplext
Grows belief !
Well, this cold clay clod
Was man’s heart ;
Crumble it, and what comes next ?
Is it God ?

R. BROWNING.

FROM SONGS WITH A PRELUDE.

I.

THE racing river leaped and sang
Full blithely in the perfect weather ;
All round the mountain's echoes rang,
For blue and green were glad together.

II.

This rained out light from every part,
And that with songs of joy was thrilling ;
But in the hollow of my heart
There ached a place that wanted filling.

III.

Before the road and river meet,
And stepping-stones are wet and glisten,
I heard a sound of laughter sweet,
And paused to like it, and to listen.

IV.

I heard the chanting waters flow,
The cushat's note, the bee's low humming,
Then turned the hedge, and did not know—
How could I?—that my time was coming.

V.

A girl upon the highest stone,
 Half-doubtful of the deed, was standing,
 So far the shallow flood had flown
 Beyond the 'customed leap of landing.

VI.

She knew not any need of me,
 Yet me she waited all unweeting ;
 She thought not I had crossed the sea
 And half the sphere to give her meeting.

VII.

I waded out, her eyes I met,
 I wished the moments had been hours ;
 I took her in my arms, and set
 Her dainty feet among the flowers.

VIII.

Her fellow-maids in copse and lane,
 Ah ! still, methinks, I hear them calling ;
 The wind's soft whisper in the plain,
 The cushat's coo, the water's falling.

IX.

But now it is a year ago,
 But now possession crowns endeavour ;
 I took her in my heart to grow
 And fill the hollow place for ever.

JEAN INGELOW.

SHADOWS.

THEY seemed to those who saw them meet
The worldly friends of every day ;
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame
Would struggle like a captured bird.

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears,—
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years !

Alas ! that love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride.
Alas ! that they delayed so long
The goal of mutual bliss beside.

Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

MILNES.

APPRENTICED.

“ COME out and hear the waters shoot, the owlet
hoot, the owlet hoot ;
Yon crescent moon, a golden boat, hangs dim
behind the tree, O !
The dropping thorn makes white the grass, O
sweetest lass, and sweetest lass ;
Come out and smell the ricks of hay adown the
croft with me, O !”

“ My granny nods before her wheel, and drops her
reel, and drops her reel ;
My father with his crony talks, as gay as gay
can be, O !
But all the milk is yet to skim, ere light wax dim,
ere light wax dim,
How can I step adown the croft, my 'prentice
lad, with thee, O ?”

“ And must ye bide, yet waiting's long, and love
is strong, and love is strong ;
And O ! had I but served the time that takes
so long to flee, O !
And thou, my lass, by morning's light wast all in
white, wast all in white,
And parson stood within the rails, a-marrying
me and thee, O !

JEAN INGELOW.

THEY PARTED, AND HER CHEEK GREW PALE.

THEY parted, and her cheek grew pale,
Her lustrous eye grew dim ;
For the wail came ever from her heart,
The low sad wail for him.

They parted, each to wend their way,
As though they had ne'er met ;
But the crushed heart would have its way,
The thoughts no power could let.

They parted,—from that hour a cloud
Hung glooming o'er her life ;
A cloud of restlessness and pain,
Of weariness and strife.

And ne'er again to either came
The glory of past hours,
For in the heart of each there lay
A grave of withered flowers.

E.



SECTION II.

**POEMS OF THE FAMILY
AFFECTIONS.**

THE LAY OF THE BROWN ROSARY.

FIRST PART.

“ONORA, Onora !” her mother is calling ;
She sits at the lattice, and hears the dew falling,
Drop after drop, from the sycamores laden
With dew as with blossoms, and calls home the
maiden—

“Night cometh, Onora !”

She looks down the garden walk caverned with
trees,
To the limes at the end where the green arbour
is—

“Some sweet thought or other may keep where it
found her,
While, forgot or unseen in the dreamlight around
her,

“Night cometh, Onora !”

She looks up the forest whose alleys shoot on
Like the mute minster aisles when the anthem is
done,
And the choristers, sitting with faces aslant,
Feel the silence to consecrate more than the
chant—

“Onora ! Onora !”

And forward she looketh across the brown heath—
 “Onora, art coming?”—What is it she seeth?
 Nought, nought but the grey border-stone that is
 wist
 To dilate and assume a wild shape in the mist—
 “My daughter!”—Then over

The casement she leaneth, and as she doth so
 She is ‘ware of her little son praying below:
 “Now, where is Onora?” He hung down his
 head
 And spake not; then, answering, blushed scarlet
 red,—
 “At the tryst with her lover!”

But his mother was wroth, in a sternness quoth
 she,
 “As thou play’st at the ball art thou playing with
 me?
 When we know that her lover to battle is gone,
 And the saints know above that she loveth but
 one,
 And will ne’er wed another?”

Then the boy wept aloud; ’twas a fair sight, yet
 sad,
 To see the tears run down the sweet blooms he
 had:
 He stamped with his foot, said—“The saints know
 I lied,
 Because truth that is wicked is fittest to hide!
 Must I utter it, mother?”

In his vehement childhood he hurried within,
And knelt at her feet as in prayer against sin,
But a child at a prayer never sobbeth as he—
“ Oh ! she sits with the nun of the brown rosary,
At nights in the ruin—

“ The old convent ruin the ivy rots off,
Where the owl hoots by day and the toad is sun-
proof,
Where no singing birds build, and the trees gaunt
and grey,
As in stormy sea-coasts appear blasted one way—
But is *this* the wind’s doing ?

“ A nun in the east wall was buried alive,
Who mocked at the priest when he called her to
shrive,
And shrieked such a curse, as the stone took her
breath,
The old abbess fell backward and swooned unto
death,

With an AVE half spoken.

“ I tried once to pass it myself and my hound,
Till, as fearing the lash, down he shivered to
ground :
A brave hound, my mother ! a brave hound, ye wot !
And the wolf thought the same with his fangs at
her throat,

In the pass of the Brocken.

“ At dawn and at eve, mother, who sitteth there
With the brown rosary never used for a prayer ?
Stoop low, mother, low ! If we went there to see,
What an ugly great hole in that east wall must be
At dawn and at even !

"Who meet there, my mother, at dawn and at even?
 Who meet by that wall, never looking to heaven?
 O sweetest my sister! what doeth with thee
 The ghost of a nun with a brown rosary,
 And a face turned from heaven?"

"St. Agnes o'erwatcheth my dreams, and ere-
 while
 I have felt through mine eyelids the warmth of her
 smile;
 But last night, as a sadness like pity came o'er
 her,
 She whispered—'Say two prayers at dawn for
 Onora:
 The Tempted is sinning.'"

"Onora, Onora!" they heard her not coming,
 Not a step on the grass, not a voice through the
 gloaming;
 But her mother looked up, and she stood on the
 floor
 Fair and still as the moonlight that came there
 before,
 And a smile just beginning:—

It touches her lips, but it dares not arise
 To the height of the mystical sphere of her eyes,
 And the large musing eyes, neither joyous nor
 sorry,
 Sing on like the angels in separate glory,
 Between clouds of amber;

For the hair droops in clouds amber-coloured till
stirred
Into gold with the gesture that comes with a
word ;
While—O soft !—her speaking is so interwound
Of the dim and the sweet, 'tis a twilight of sound,
And floats through the chamber.

“Since thou shrivest my brother, fair mother,”
said she,
“I count on thy priesthood for marrying of me ;
And I know by the hills that the battle is done,
That my lover rides on—will be here with the sun,
'Neath the eyes that behold thee.”

Her mother sat silent—too tender, I wiss,
Of the smile her dead father smiled, dying to kiss :
But the boy started up, pale with tears passion-
wrought—
“O wicked fair sister, the hills utter nought !
If he cometh, who told thee ?”

“I know by the hills,” she resumed calm and clear ;
“By the beauty upon them, that he is anear :
Did they ever look *so* since he bade me adieu ?
Oh, love in the waking, sweet brother, is true
As St. Agnes in sleeping !”

Half ashamed and half softened, the boy did not
speak,
And the blush met the lashes which fell on his
cheek.
She bowed down to kiss him : dear saints, did he
see,
Or feel, on her bosom, the BROWN ROSARY,
That he shrank away weeping ?

SECOND PART.

A bed. ONORA sleeping.

Angels, but not near.

First Angel. Must we stand so far, and she
So very fair?

Second Angel. As bodies be.

First Angel. And she so mild?

Second Angel. As spirits when
They meeken, not to God, but men.

First Angel. And she so young, that I, who bring
Good dreams for saintly children, might
Mistake that small soft face to-night,
And fetch her such a blessed thing
That at her waking she would weep
For childhood lost anew in sleep.
How hath she sinned?

Second Angel. In bartering love;
God's love for man's.

First Angel. We may reprove
The world for this, not only her:
Let me approach to breathe away
This dust of the heart with holy air.

Second Angel. Stand off! She sleeps and did
not pray.

First Angel. Did none pray for her?

Second Angel. Ay, a child—
Who never praying wept before:
While, in a mother undefiled,
Prayer goeth on in sleep as true,
As pauseless as the pulses do.

First Angel. Then I approach.

Second Angel. It is not willed.

First Angel. One word : is she redeemed ?

Second Angel. No more ! The place is filled.

[*Angels vanish.*]

Evil Spirit (in a nun's garb by the bed). Forbear that dream !—forbear that dream ! too near to heaven it leaned.

Onora (in sleep). Nay, leave me this, but only this ! 'tis but a dream, sweet fiend !

Evil Spirit. It is a thought.

Onora (in sleep). A sleeping thought—most innocent of good :

It doth the Devil no harm, sweet fiend ! It cannot if it would.

I say in it no holy hymn ; I do no holy work ; I scarcely hear the Sabbath bell that chimeth from the kirk.

Evil Spirit. Forbear that dream !—forbear that dream !

Onora (in sleep). Nay, sweet fiend, let me go : I never more can walk with him—oh, never more but so !

For they have tied my father's feet beneath the kirkyard stone :

Oh ! deep and straight—oh ! very straight—they move at night alone ;

And then he calleth through my dreams, he calleth tenderly,

“ Come forth, my daughter, my beloved, and walk the field with me.”

Evil Spirit. Forbear that dream, or else disprove its pureness by a sign.

Onora (in sleep). Speak on, thou shalt be satisfied my word shall answer thine.

I heard a bird which used to sing when I, a child, was praying ;

I see the poppies in the corn I used to sport away in.
 What shall I do—tread down the dew, and pull
 the blossoms blowing,
 Or clap my wicked hands to fright the finches from
 the rowan?

Evil Spirit. Thou shalt do something harder still.
 Stand up where thou do^t stand,
 Among the fields of Dreamland with thy father
 hand in hand,
 And clear and slow repeat the vow, declare its
 cause and kind,
 Which not to break, in sleep or wake, thou bearest
 on thy mind.

Onora (in sleep). I hear a vow of sinful kind—
 a vow for mournful cause;
 I vowed it deep, I vowed it strong; the Spirits
 laughed applause—
 The Spirits trailed along the pines low laughter like
 a breeze,
 While, high atween their swinging tops, the stars
 appeared to freeze.

Evil Spirit. More calm and free speak out to
 me why such a vow was made.

Onora (in sleep). Because that God decreed my
 death, and I shrank back afraid.
 Have patience, O dead father mine! I did not
 fear to die—
 I wish I were a young dead child and had thy
 company;
 I wish I lay beside thy feet a buried three-year
 child,
 And wearing only a kiss of thine upon my lips that
 smiled.
 The linden-tree that covers thee might so have
 shadowed twain,

For death itself I did not fear—'tis love that makes
the pain :

Love feareth death. I was no child ; I was be-
trothed that day ;

I wore a troth kiss on my lips I could not give
away.

How could I bear to lie content and still beneath a
stone,

And feel mine own betrothed go by—alas ! no
more mine own—

Go leading by in wedding pomp some lovely lady
brave,

With cheeks that blushed as red as rose, while
mine were white in grave?

How could I bear to sit in heaven, on e'er so high
a throne,

And hear him say to her—to *her*!—that else he
loveth none?

Though e'er so high I sat above, though e'er so
low he spake,

As clear as thunder I should hear the new oath he
might take,

That hers, forsooth, were heavenly eyes, ah me !
while very dim,

Some heavenly eyes (indeed of heaven !) would
darken down to *him*!

Evil Spirit. Who told thee thou wast called to
death?

Onora (in sleep). I sat all night beside thee ;
The grey owl on the ruined wall shut both his eyes
to hide thee,

And ever he flapped his heavy wing all brokenly
and weak,

And the long grass waved against the sky around
his gasping beak:

I sat beside thee all the night while the moonlight
 lay forlorn,
 Strewn round us like a dead man's shroud in ghastly
 fragments torn,
 And through the night, and through the hush, and
 over the flapping wing,
 We heard beside the heavenly gate the angels mur-
 muring :
 We heard them say, " Put day to day, and count
 the days to seven,
 And God will draw Onora up the golden stair of
 heaven ;
 And yet the evil ones have leave that purpose to
 defer,
 For if she has no need of Him, He has no need of
 her."

Evil Spirit. Speak out to me ! speak bold and
 free.

Onora (in sleep). And then I heard thee say—
 " I count upon my rosary brown the hours thou
 hast to stay ;
 Yet God permits us evil ones to put by that
 decree,
 Since if thou hast no need of Him, He has no need
 of thee ;
 And if thou wilt forego the sight of angels, verily
 Thy true-love gazing on thy face shall guess what
 angels be,
 Nor bride shall pass save thee." Alas ! my
 father's hand's a-cold,
 The meadows seem—

Evil Spirit. Forbear the dream, or let the
 vow be told.

Onora (in sleep). I vowed upon thy rosary brown,
 this string of antique beads,

By charnel lichens overgrown, and dank among
the weeds,
This rosary brown which is thine own, lost soul of
buried nun !
Who, lost by vow, wouldest render now all souls
alike undone—
I vowed upon thy rosary brown—and till such vow
should break,
A pledge always of living days 'twas hung around
my neck—
I vowed to thee on rosary (dead father, look not
so !)
*I would not thank God in my weal nor seek God in
my woe.*

Evil Spirit. And canst thou prove—

Onora (in sleep). O love, my
love ! I felt him near again,
I saw his steed on mountain head, I heard it on
the plain !
Was this no weal for me to feel ? Is greater weal
than this ?

Yet, when he came, I wept his name, and the
angels heard but *his*.

Evil Spirit. Well done, well done !

Onora (in sleep). Ah me, the
sun ! the dreamlight 'gins to pine,
Ah me, how dread can look the dead ! Aroint
thee, Father mine !

She starteth from slumber, she sitteth upright,
And her breath comes in sobs while she stares
through the night :
There is nought ; the great willow her lattice
before,
Large-drawn in the moon, lieth calm on the floor ;

But her hands tremble fast as their pulses; and
free
From the death-clasp, close over—the BROWN
ROSARY.

THIRD PART.

"Tis a morn for a bridal—the merry bride-bell
Rings clear through the greenwood that skirts the
chapelle,
And the priest at the altar awaiteth the bride,
And the sacristans slyly are jesting aside
At the work shall be doing;

While down through the wood rides that fair
company,
The youths with the courtship, the maids with the
glee,
Till the chapel cross opens to sight, and at once
All the maids sigh demurely and think for the
nonce,
"And so endeth a wooing!"

And the bride and the bridegroom are leading the
way,
With his hand on her rein and a word yet to say;
Her dropt eyelids suggest the soft answer beneath,
And the little quick smiles come and go with her
breath,
When she sigheth or speaketh.

And the tender bride-mother breaks off unaware
From an Ave, to think that her daughter is fair,
Till in nearing the chapel and glancing before,
She seeth her little son stand at the door:
Is it play that he seeketh?

Is it play when his eyes wander innocent wild,
And sublimed with a sadness unfitting a child?
He trembles not, weeps not, the passion is done,
And calmly he kneels in their midst, with the sun
On his head like a glory.

"O fair-featured maids, ye are many!" he cried,
"But in fairness and vileness who matcheth the
bride?"
O brave-hearted youths, ye are many, but whom
For the courage and woe can ye match with the
groom,
As ye see them before ye?"

Out spake the bride's mother, "The vileness is
thine,
If thou shame thine own sister, a bride at the
shrine;"
Out spake the bride's lover, "The vileness be mine
If he shame mine own wife at the hearth or the
shrine,
And the charge be unprovëd.

"Bring the charge, prove the charge, brother,
speak it aloud,
Let thy father and hers hear it deep in his shroud."
"O father! thou seest, for dead eyes can see,
How she wears on her bosom *a brown rosary*,
O my father belovëd!"

Then outlaughed the bridegroom, and outlaughed
withal
Both maidens and youths by the old chapel wall:

"So she weareth no love-gift, kind brother,"
 quoth he,
 "She may wear, an' she listeth, a brown rosary,
 Like a pure-hearted lady."

Then swept through the chapel the long bridal
 train ;
 Though he spake to the bride she replied not
 again,
 On, as one in a dream, pale and stately she went,
 Where the altar-lights burn o'er the great sacrament,
 Faint with daylight, but steady.

And her brother had passed in between them and
 her,
 And calmly knelt down on the high altar stair—
 Of an infantine aspect so stern to the view,
 That the priest could not smile on the child's eye
 of blue,
 As he would for another.

He knelt like a child, marble-sculptured and white,
 That seems kneeling to pray on the tomb of a
 knight,
 With a look taken up to each iris of stone
 From the greatness and death where he kneebleth,
 but none
 From the face of a mother.

"In your chapel, O priest, ye have wedded and
 shiven
 Fair wives for the hearth and fair sinners for
 heaven ;

But this fairest, my sister, ye think now to wed,
Bid her kneel where she standeth and shrive her
instead—

O shrive her and wed not!"

In tears the bride's mother, "Sir Priest, unto thee
Would he lie as he lied to this fair company."
In wrath the bride's lover, "The lie shall be clear!
Speak it out, boy, the saints in their niches shall
hear.

Be the charge proved or said not!"

Then serene in his childhood he lifted his face,
And his voice sounded holy and fit for the place,
"Look down from your niches, ye still saints and
see
How she wears on her bosom *a brown rosary!*"
Is it used for the praying?"

The youths look aside—to laugh there were a sin,
And the maidens' lips trembled from smiles shut
within;
Quoth the priest, "Thou art wild, pretty boy!
Blessed she
Who prefers at her bridal *a brown rosary*
To a worldly arraying."

The bridegroom spake low, and led onward the
bride,
And before the high altar they stood side by side;
The rite-book is opened, the rite is begun,
They have knelt down together to rise up as one.
Who laughed by the altar?

The maidens looked forward, the youths looked around.

The bridegroom's eye flashed from his prayer at the sound.

And each saw the bride as if no bride she were,
Gazing cold as the priest without gesture of prayer,
As he read from the psalter.

The priest never knew that she did so, but still
He set a power on him too strong for his will,
And whatever the great name was there to be read,
His voice sank in silence—tear could not be
seen.

Or the air could not hold it.

"I have sinned," quoth he. "I have sinned, I
was—"

And the more the nearer his old cheeks at the
thought.

They dropped back on the bank, but he read on the
same.

And now was the silence where should be the same,
As the darkness and it.

The side-bank is closed, and the side being done,
They who knot bough together make up as one;
Fair meet the bride—oh, a fair bride is she!
But, for all, think the maidens, that bough rosemary,
No saint at her praying.

What ailed the bridegroom? He glares black
and white;
Then suddenly turning he kisses the bride—

His lip stung her with cold, she glanced upwardly
mute :
“ Mine own wife ! ” he said, and fell stark at her
foot

In the word he was saying.

They have lifted him up, but his head sinks away,
And his face sheweth bleak in the sunshine, and
grey.

Leave him now where he lieth—for oh, never more
Will he kneel at an altar or stand on a floor !

Let his bride gaze upon him.

Long and still was her gaze while they chafed him
there,
And breathed in the mouth whose last life had
kissed her,
But when they stood up—only *they* ! with a start
The shriek from her soul struck her pale lips apart:
She has lived, and foregone him !

And low on his body she droppeth adown—
“ Didst call me thine own wife, beloved, thine own ?
Then take thine own with thee ! thy coldness is
warm
To the world’s cold without thee. Come, keep me
from harm,
In a calm of thy teaching ! ”

She looked in his face, earnest, long, as in sooth
There were hope of an answer, and then kissed his
mouth,
And with head on his bosom, wept, wept bitterly—
“ Now, O God ! take pity—take pity on me !
God hear my beseeching ! ”

She was 'ware of a shadow that crossed where she
lay,
She was 'ware of a presence that withered the
day;
Wild she sprang to her feet—"I surrender to
thee
The broken vow's pledge, the accursed rosary,—
I am ready for dying!"

She dashed it in scorn to the marble-paved ground,
Where it fell mute as snow, and a weird music
sound
Crept up like a chill up the aisles long and dim,
As the fiends tried to mock at the choristers' hymn,
And moaned in the trying.

FOURTH PART.

Onora looketh listlessly adown the garden walk :
" I am weary, O my mother, of thy tender talk ;
I am weary of the trees a-waving to and fro—
Of the stedfast skies above, the running brooks
below.
All things are the same but I—only I am dreary ;
And, mother, of my dreariness behold me very
weary.
Mother, brother, pull the flowers I planted in the
spring,
And smiled to think I should smile more upon
their gathering.
The bees will find out other flowers ; oh, pull
them, dearest mine !
And carry them, and carry me before St. Agnes'
shrine."



Whereat they pulled the summer flowers she planted
in the spring,
And her and them all mournfully to Agnes' shrine
did bring.

She looked up to the pictured saint, and gently
shook her head—
“The picture is too calm for *me*—too calm for *me*,”
she said :
“The little flowers we brought with us before it we
may lay,
For those who used to look at heaven—but *I* must
turn away,
Because no sinner under sun can dare or bear to
gaze
On God’s or angel’s holiness, except in Jesu’s face.”

She spoke with passion after pause, “And were it
wisely done,
If we who cannot gaze above should walk the
earth alone?—
If we whose virtue is so weak should have a will so
strong,
And stand blind on the rocks to choose the right
path from the wrong?

To choose, perhaps, a love-lit hearth, instead of
love and heaven—
A single rose, for a rose-tree which beareth seven
times seven?
A rose that droppeth from the hand, that fadeth in
the breast,
Until, in grieving for the worst, we learn what is
the best.”

Then breaking into tears, "Dear God!" she cried,
 "and must we see
 All blissful things depart from us or e'er we go to
~~thee~~?
 We cannot guess thee in the wood, or hear thee in
 the wind?
 Our cedars must fall round us ere we see the light
 behind?
 An' sooth, we feel too strong in weal to need thee
 on the road,
 But woe being come, the soul is dumb that crieth
 not on 'God.'"
 Her mother could not speak for tears; she ever
 murmur'd thus,
 "*The bees will find out other flowers, but what is left
 for us?*"
 But her young brother stayed his sobs, and knelt
 beside her knee:
 "Thou, sweetest sister in the world, hast never a
 word for me."
 She passed her hand across his face, she pressed
 it on her cheek
 So tenderly, so tenderly—she needed not to speak.

The wreath that lay on shrine that day at vespers
 bloomed no more;
 The woman fair who placed it there had died an
 hour before.
 Both perished mute for lack of root, earth's nourish-
 ment to reach.
 O Nature, breathe (the ballad saith) some sweet-
 ness out of each!

E. BROWNING.

THE WAKEFUL SLEEPER.

WHEN things are holding wonted pace
In wonted paths without a trace,
 Or hint of neighbouring wonder,
Sometimes, from other realms, a tone,
A scent, a vision, swift, alone,
 Breaks common life asunder.

It fell so on one music-night,
Where men and women cheerful, bright,
 Wafted away their leisure ;
For midst the city's noisy care
The silent ear will claim its share
 Of self-consuming pleasure.

They all are listening around,
As gush on gush the bubbling sound
 Now breaks like spring o'erflowing,
Now wavers, ebbing with its streams,
On which are floating waif-like dreams,
 Still coming, and still going.

When, silent as a tone itself
Before the finger frees the elf,
 Bee-like, with honey laden,
The door comes open, just ajar—
A little further, just as far
 As shows a tiny maiden.

Silently she enters, her pink toes
Daintily peeping, as she goes.

Her eyes ~~sparkled~~ from under
All gazed with varied mirth and look :
She glided through them all, and took
No notice of their wonder.

They made a path : and she went through—
She had her little child in view,

Closer by the chimney-corner.
She turned—sat down beside them all,
Silently as princess at a ball,
And silent as a mourner.

But as she turned her face away,
They saw what had escaped their view
As through them she came creeping,
'Twas this that thought the child could walk,
And on her sweet lips hovered talk,
Not less the child was sleeping.

"Play on," the mother whisper'd, "play ;
When she has enough she'll go away."

They played and she sat listening,
Over her face the melody
Floated like low winds o'er the sea ;
Her cheeks like eyes were glistening.

Her hands tight-clasped her bent knees hold ;
Like long grass drooping on the wold,
Her sightless head is bending.
She sits all ears, and drinks her ill,
Then rising goes, sedate and still,
On silent white feet wending.

Ah, little maiden ! listen so.
Who knows what unto thee will go ?
 What strength for future sorrow ?
What hope to help thee in the day
When trouble creeps into thy play ?
 For thou wilt wake to-morrow.

And little as thou then wilt know
Whence come the hopes to meet the woe—
 Of what thou art partaker ;
No more we know what comes, when sleep
Has bathed us all in stillness deep,
 And given us to our Maker.

Sleep on, or wake, to each resigned.
Wake, and still hearing, thou wilt find
 The source of all the river,
As we, when we awake at last,
Shall hear old music that had passed,
 And see the unseen Giver.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

DO YE THINK O' THE DAYS THAT ARE GONE, JEANIE?

“ Do ye think o’ the days that are gone, Jeanie,
As ye sit by yer fire at night?
Do ye wish that the morn would bring back the
time
When your heart and step were light ?”
“ I think o’ the days that are gone, Robin,
And of all I joyed in then ;
But the brightest that ever arose on me
I have never wished back again.”

“ Do ye think o’ the hopes that are gone, Jeanie,
As ye sit by yer fire at night?
Do ye gather them up as they faded fast,
Like buds with an early blight ?”
“ Think of the hopes that are gone, Robin,
I mourn that their stay was fleet ;
For they fell as the leaves of the red-rose fall,
And were e’en in their falling sweet.”

“ Do ye think o’ the friends that are gone, Jeanie,
As ye sit by yer fire at night?
Do ye wish they were round ye again once more,
By the hearth they made so bright ?”
“ I think of the friends that are gone, Robin,
They’re dear to my heart as then ;
But the best and the dearest among them all
I have never wished back again.”

DORA GREENWELL.

TROTTY.

I.

WHO would be a mother ?
Not a moment's peace !
Cares succeed each other ;
Troubles never cease.—
You may call them fancies—
You, papa, may laugh—
Take my place, or Nancy's,
For a day or half.
You know nought of sitting
Mending little frocks,
You know nought of knitting
Heaps of pairs of socks ;
You taste all the pleasures,
You're the source of joys,
You bring all the treasures,
Sugar-plums and toys ;
You don't do the scolding,
You don't hear the frets,
You are spared beholding
Pranks, and pouts, and pets ;
You don't give the powder,
You don't hear the cry
As it waxes louder,
And the face grows wry.

Dressed at morning neatly,
 Trotty's carried down
 Just to kiss you sweetly
 Ere you start for town.
 Next, all smile and dimple,
 Sash and spotless skirt,
 Trotty, shy and simple,
 Enters with dessert.
 Brisk as her canary
 Perches on your knee.
 Roguish-looking fairy !
 Who so proud as she ?
 Cheeks like ripened peaches,
 Shoulders plump and fair,
 Mouth that lisps soft speeches,
 Rings of hazel hair,
 Eyes like sapphires gleaming,
 Wistfully and merry ;
 Sideway glances, scheming
 For a cake or cherry.
 " Good as gold !" No wonder !
 Humoured, coaxed, and fed,
 Pocket full of plunder,
 Trotty trots to bed ;
 Nought to check or foil her,
 Best of tiny queens !
 Ah, papa, you spoil her !
 Look behind the scenes.

* * * *

Morning—I am dressing—
 Dark November day ;
 Hark ! a scream distressing
 Sounds across the way,

Down go locks I'm brushing,
Brushes on the floor,
Out, half clad, I'm rushing
To the nursery door.
“Nancy, what's the matter?”
“Nothing, mum!” I'm told.
“Miss is cross—look at her!—
‘Cause the water's cold.”
Day outside looks rawly,
Fog is thick as glue,
Weather looking squally—
Trotty squally too!
Back I trudge, my fingers
Nipping with the frost;
Long my toilet lingers,
Everything is lost.
Breakfast safely over,
You put on your boots,
Leaving me “In clover,”
To my home pursuits!”
“Clover!” How man settles
Our affairs, forsooth!
Had he talked of *nettles*
‘Twould be nearer truth.
Down I sit to patching,
Nurse up-stairs at work,
Trotty, mischief hatching,
Squatting like a Turk!
Playthings round her scattered—
Things that squeak and bark!
Creatures maimed and battered
Out of “Noah's Ark.”
Battledores she drums on
With a face like Puck's,
Noisy things she thrums on,

Painted ones she sucks,
Asking questions puzzling,
Twenty in a breath ;
Now the kittenuzzling,
Hugging it to death.
Leave my chair a minute,
Just when some one knocks,
Trotty clambers in it,
Rummaging my box.
Back I hurry grumbling,
Risking sprains and falls,
Into waggons tumbling,
Slipping over balls.
What is Trotty doing ?
Quiet far too long,
Mischief must be brewing—
Something going wrong.
All my work is stopping,
Lost my scissors big,
Trotty has them cropping
Dolly's flaxen wig !
Door left open slightly :
Gracious ! what a row !
Trotty's slipped out lightly—
What's the matter now ?
Up I start : "Where's Trotty ?"
Sprawling on the mat !
Swollen eyes, brow knotty,
Dolly mangled flat.
What does it betoken ?
Trotty tripped her toes,
Trotty's heart is broken,
So is dolly's nose !
"Naughty girl for straying !"
"Bless us, what a shriek !

Living Voices.

135

Can't hear what I'm saying.
Dear, she's cut her cheek!
Here's a fresh disaster,
Here are mother's cares.
'Nancy, fetch some plaster—
Take the child up-stairs.'"

II.

Summer time is coming;
Every flowery bell
Woos the hive-bee humming :—
Trotty isn't well.
Cowslips gold come trooping,
Daisies white and red,
But my daisy's drooping :—
Trotty hangs her head.
Rosy buds upspringing
Peep from leaf and stalk,
Merry birds are singing :—
Trotty doesn't talk.
Sunshine glitters brightly,
Garden walks look gay,
Butterflies float whitely :—
Trotty doesn't play,
All her toys forsaken,
"Come, my pet, to me !
Trotty shall be taken
Up on mammy's knee."
Never mind the knitting,
Heels, or toes, or soles,
Let the rents go splitting,
Never mind the holes.
Hands at work once nimble
Now the pulse must feel.

Puss has got the thimble,
Kitten has the reel.
Needles, pins, go missing—
No one breeds them now—
Mammy's busy kissing
Trotty's heated brow;
Mammy's busy pressing
Trotty's little hands,
Coining words caressing,
Trotty understands.
Little brown curls lying
Pressed to mammy's breast,
Little bosom sighing,
Little feet at rest,
Eyelids falling heavy,
Blue eyes in eclipse,
Wan smiles, hard to levy,
On the little lips.
Nothing now of fretting,
Only mute appeal,
Trust in mammy's petting,
Mammy's power to heal !
Tiny form resistless,
Round cheeks void of bloom,
Little fingers listless,
Silence in the room.
Birds without chirp shrilly,
All within is dull,
Trotty sits so still—
What a dreary full !
“Look at pussy's tricking !”
Trotty doesn't care.
How that clock is ticking
Underneath the stair—
Wish 'twas in the cellar !

Like a gong it strikes.
“Cook for orders.” Tell her
Order what she likes.
All the house feels lonely,
Echoes all seem dead ;
Did they answer only
Trotty’s voice and tread ?
Sunshine don’t look cheering,
Summer don’t rejoice ;
How we miss the hearing
One familiar voice !
How we miss the seeing
One small baby face ;
Such a tiny being
Filling so much space !
What says Trotty, bless her ?
Put her in her cot ;
Mammy will undress her,
Mammy’s darling Trot !
Pack off callers, Nelly,
In the afternoon.
Nancy, bring some jelly,
Powders, and a spoon.
Don’t admit one rover—
Not a fib you’ll tell—
I’m “engaged all over !”
Trotty isn’t well.

* * * * *

Trotty’s sweetly sleeping,
So I’ve slipped away,
After vigil keeping
All night long, and day.
Couldn’t bear to leave her—
Now, papa, don’t smile !—
’Twas so much like fever,

Don't you say 'twas bile !
You may take it coolly,
 You slept bravely through,
You were snoring, truly,
 Loud enough for two !
I can soothe and chasten,
 You can make her glad,
But to me she'll hasten,
 When she's sick or sad.
Men are like each other,
 Slow to feel or act ;
You are not a mother,
 That's a patent fact !
You don't care a tittle
 Till the danger comes.
Oh ! you're good for little
 But for sugar-plums !
Pooh ! a fig for pity
 That can snore like yours.
Buy her something pretty ;
 Toys work wondrous cures.
You've "engagements pressing—
 Can't buy toys to-day."
Do you mind confessing
 What engagements, pray ?
"Dinner, and a meeting."
 That's how you're beguiled :
Gossiping and eating,
 And forget your child !
Hang Associations !
 "British" fiddlestick !
Old wives' dissertations !
 Tell them Trotty's sick.
Is it "Mother's folly ?"
 Men are selfish churls.

Bring her home a dolly,
One with hazel curls.
Hush ! the darling chatters.
“Spoil her ?” Never fear !
Folly spoils and flatters ;
Love spoils no one, dear !

HARRIET E. HUNTER.

WHEN THE NIGHT AND MORNING MEET.

IN the dark and narrow street,
 Into a world of woe,
Where the tread of many feet
 Went trampling to and fro,
 A child was born—speak low!
When the night and morning meet.

Full seventy summers back
Was this : so long ago,
The feet that wore the track
Are lying straight and low ;
Yet hath there been no lack
Of passers to and fro.

Within the narrow street,
This childhood ever played ;
Beyond the narrow street,
This manhood never strayed ;
This age sat still and prayed
Anear the trampling feet.

The tread of ceaseless feet
Flowed through his life, unstirred
By water's fall, a fleet
Wind music, or the bird
Of morn ; these sounds are sweet,
But they were still unheard.

Within the narrow street
I stood beside a bed,
I held a dying head
When the night and morning meet ;
And every word was sweet,
Though few the words we said.

And as we talked, dawn drew
To day, the world was fair
In fields afar, I knew ;
Yet spoke not to him then
Of how the grasses grew
Besprent with dew-drops rare.

We spoke not of the sun,
Nor of this green earth fair—
This soul, whose day was done,
Had never claimed its share
In these, and yet its rare,
Rich heritage had won.

From the dark and narrow street,
Into a world of love,
A child was born—speak low !
Speak reverent, for we know
Not how they speak above,
When the night and morning meet.

DORA GREENWELL.

LITTLE WILLIE.

Poor little Willie,
With his many pretty wiles,
Worlds of wisdom in his looks,
And quaint, quiet smiles ;
Hair of amber, touch'd with
Gold of heaven so brave,
All lying darkly hid
In a workhouse grave.

You remember little Willie,
Fair and funny fellow ; he
Sprang like a lily
From the dirt of poverty.
Poor little Willie !
Not a friend was nigh
When from the cold world
He crouch'd down to die.

In the day we wander'd foodless,
Little Willie cried for bread ;
In the night we wander'd homeless,
Little Willie cried for bed ;
Parted at the workhouse door,
Not a word we said ;
Ah ! so tired was poor Willie,
And so sweetly sleep the dead.

'Twas in the dead of winter
We laid him in the earth ;
The world brought in the new year,
On a tide of mirth ;
But for lost little Willie
Not a tear we crave,
Cold and hunger cannot wake him
In his workhouse grave.

We thought him beautiful,
Felt it hard to part ;
We loved him dutiful—
Down, down, poor heart !
The storms they may beat,
The winter winds may rave,
Little Willie feels not
In his workhouse grave.

No room for little Willie—
In the world he had no part ;
On him stared the Gorgon-eye,
Through which looks no heart.
Come to me, said Heaven ;
And if Heaven will save,
Little matters though the door
Be a workhouse grave.

GERALD MASSEY.

THE BABY.

ANOTHER little wave
Upon the sea of life,
Another soul to save
Amid the toil and strife.

Two more little feet
To walk the dusty road,
To choose where two paths meet—
The narrow and the broad.

Two more little hands
To work for good or ill,
Two more little eyes,
Another little will.

Another heart to love
Receiving love again ;
And so the baby comes,
A thing of joy and pain.

The baby wept,
The mother took it from the nurse's arms,
And soothed its grief and still'd its vain alarms,
And baby slept.

Again it weeps,
And God doth take it from the mother's arms,
From present pain and future unknown harms,
And baby sleeps !

D. HINDS.

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little
Annie?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks
like a man.
And Willy's wife has written : she never was over-
wise,
Never the wife for Willy : he wouldn't take my
advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to
save,
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into
his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty ! but I was against it
for one.
Eh!—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you
say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the
flock ;
Never a man could fling him : for Willy stood like
a rock.

“Here’s a leg for a babe of a week !” says doctor ;
and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes
round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but
still of his tongue !
I ought to have gone before him : I wonder he
went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie : I have not long to
stay ;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far
away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie ? You think I
am hard and cold ;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so
old ;
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the
rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with
the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father,
my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a
tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie : it cost me a world
of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VI.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and
 I knew right well
 That Jenny had ~~wife~~ in her time: I knew, but I
 would not tell.
 And she to be coming and slandering me, the base
 little var':
 But the tongue is a fire, as you know, my dear,
 the tongue is a fire.

VII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he
 said likewise,
 That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest
 of lies.
 That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought
 with outright.
 But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter
 to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a
 week and a day;
 And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the
 middle of May.
 Jenny to slander me, who knew what Jenny had
 been?
 But soiling another, Annie, will never make one-
 self clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an
 evening late,
 I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the
 road at the gate.

The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the
dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chir-
rup the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt: there past by the gate
of the farm
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his
arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce
knew how.
Oh ! there's no fool like the old one—it makes me
angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing
that he meant;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking curtsey and
went.
And I said, “ Let us part: in a hundred years it'll
all be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good
name.”

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the
sweet moonshine :
“ Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good
name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you
well or ill ;
But marry me out of hand : we too shall be happy
still.”

XIV.

"Marry you, Willy?" said I, "but I needs must speak my mind.
And I fear you'll turn to tiles, be jealous and hard and unkind."
But he turned and clasped me in his arms, and answered, "No love, no!"
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded: I wore a lilac gown;
And the ringers sang with a will, and he gave the
ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bore was dead before he
was born.
Shadow and shade is life, little Annie, flower and
thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of
death.
There lay the sweet little body that never had
drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Annie, not since I had been
a wife:
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had
fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger
or pain:
I look'd at the still little baby—his trouble had all
been in vain.

For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn :
But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay :
Kind, like a man, was he—like a man, too, would have his way :
Never jealous—not he : we had many a happy year ;
And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died :
I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget :
But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie, who left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you :
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre, and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they
sing to their team :
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of
a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about
my bed—
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them
left alive ;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and
ten ;
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly
men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace—it is not often I
grieve ;
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at
eve :
And the neighbours come and laugh and gossip,
and so do I ;
I find myself often laughing at things that have
long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure, the preacher says, our sins should
make us sad ;
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to
be had ;

And God, not man, is the judge of us all when life
shall cease;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one
of Peace.

xxv.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
And happy has been my life; but I would not live
it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for
rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with
the best.

xxvi.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my
flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for
an hour,—
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into
the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to
be vext?

xxvii.

And Willy's wife has written—she never was over-
wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie: thank God that I keep
my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have
passed away.
But stay with the old woman now; you cannot
have long to stay.

TENNYSON.

COMING HOME.

THE lift is high and blue,
And the new moon glints through
 The bonnie corn stooks o' Strathairly.
My ship's in Largo Bay,
And I ken it well, the way
 Up the steep, steep brae o' Strathairly.

When I sailed over the sea,
A laddie bold and free,
 The corn sprang green on Strathairly ;
When I come back again
"Tis an auld man walks his lane,
 Slow and sad through the fields o' Strathairly.

O' the shearers that I see,
Ne'er a body kens me,
 Though I kent them a' at Strathairly ;
And this fisher-wife I pass,
Can she be the braw lass
 That I kissed at the back o' Strathairly ?

Oh, the land's fine, fine !
I could buy it a' for mine ;
 My gowd's yellow as the stooks o' Strathairly ;
But I fain yon lad wad be,
That sailed over the salt sea
 When the dawn rose grey on Strathairly.

D. M. CRAIK

A MOTHER'S WAIL.

OH ! Jamie, Jamie, let me greet,
Your kindness cheers nae mair ;
I canna dry my tears at will,
Nor frae me fling my care.
I ken your ain heart's sad, for she
Was sunshine in your ee ;
But yours is but a father's love,
And you maun bear wi' me.

Oh ! Jamie, let me greet—my heart
Is sad as sorrow's sel' ;
It seems but yesterday our tears
On Willie's wee face fell.
We thocht our lot was hard, when death
Ae bairn had ta'en awa' ;
But, oh ! how muckle harder noo
When we hae nane ava !

Had Heaven been pleased to warn us
O' the blow that was to fa',
And lightly leanin', let her dwine
As Willie dwined awa',
We might hae schooled our hearts to bide
The fate we couldna' flee,
And waited wi' a patient grief
To close our darling's ee.

But, oh ! without a gloaming,
 Till bereavement's night at last ;
 Wi' scarce a rustle o' its wings,
 Awa' her spirit passed.
 Though hopefu' seemed her cheek's new bloom,
 And hale her ee's blithe light,
 'Twas but the clearness o' the sky
 When fa's the April blicht.

She wasna like anither bairn,
 Whose prattlin's nocht but din ;
 For there was wisdom in her words
 Far, far her years aboon.
 And whiles sic startlin' things she speired
 That in my heart I've sain
 " An angel watchin' owre our souls
 Is speakin' in my wean."

And ance with sparklin' een she sat,
 And at the lift gazed lang,
 And speired when I nae sang could hear,
 " Wha sings that bonny sang ?"
 And yet, alas ! we saw nae sign,
 For hard were we to learn
 That a' our love would fail to shield
 Frae death our only bairn.

She aye was at my foot, Jamie,
 And whiles I fashed awee,
 When aiblins at my thrangest time
 She grat to get my knee.
 And but and ben, and out and in,
 To toddle was her pride—
 The dear wee lamb, she couldna bear
 To leave her mither's side.

Oh ! Jamie, twa long days I've watched
 Her sweet white face in vain ;
My longing brings nae warmth—her smile
 Will ne'er return again.
'Twas some sad solace on her brow
 At times to lay my hauns,
But bleak will be the morning
 On a bairnless hearth that dawns.

She'll lie in Willie's grave, Jamie :—
 Oh ! come nae first awa',
But wait and smooth the turf, and drap
 A tear aboon the twa.
For if their sperits—as they may—
 Unseen be lingering near,
'Twill cheer them even in heaven to mind
 Their father's parting tear.

DAVID WINGATE.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

“WHAT art thou thinking of?” said the mother;

“What art thou thinking of, my child?”

“I was thinking of heaven,” he answered her,

And looked up in her face, and smiled.

“And what didst thou think of heaven?” she said,

“Tell me, my little one.”

“Oh! I thought that there the flowers never fade—

That there never sets the sun.”

“And would’st thou love to go thither, my child?

Thither would’st thou love to go;

And leave the pretty flowers that wither,

And the sun that sets below?”

“Oh! I would be glad to go there, mother—

To go and live there now;

And I would pray for thy coming, mother—

My mother, would’st not thou?”

CHRISTINA ROSETTI.

WHEN WILL FATHER COME HOME?

A house beside the sea,
A small house by the sea,
 With a room all bright,
 In the rich fire-light,
And a child on its mother's knee.

A girl with golden hair,
With rippling golden hair,
 And a clear blue eye
 Like an isle in the sky
Of cloud left suddenly bare.

The mother is singing a song,
A simple tremulous song,
 Of a sailor brave
 Whom the wind and wave
To his home are bearing along.

“ Will father come back soon,
Will he come back very soon ? ”
 Is the wistful quest,
 Half to her address'd,
Half to the rising moon.

“To-morrow—perhaps to-night—
 He may come this very night,
 While Maud is at rest
 In her soft warm nest,
 And the moon is shining bright.”

* * * * *

O house beside the sea !
 Small house by the moonlit sea !
 Is it ghost or sprite
 Dividing the light
 That leaves a shadow on thee ?

The mother stood by the bed,
 Stood and gazed on the small white bed ;
 Oh ! the empty space !
 Oh ! the vanish'd face !
 And the pillow press'd by the head !

She track'd the feet on the sand,
 The small bare feet on the sand,
 To the very verge
 Of the foaming surge,
 Where the tide's flow narrow'd the land.

She saw the prints in the wave,
 The small prints beneath the wave,
 And a frantic cry
 Pierced the morning sky,
 Making the echoes rave.

They bore her from the foam,
 Half-senseless away from the foam,
 And the waves seem'd to say,
 In their cruel play,
 “Oh ! when will father come home ?”

* * * * *

A house beside the sea,
A small house by the sea,
 And a mother's first glance,
 Resting after her trance,
On a child on her father's knee.

He had found her down on the shore,
On the wave-worn edge of the shore,
 As homeward the tide
 In its swollen pride
His boat in the morning bore.

W. PARKINSON.

THE BIRD.

A CHILD'S SONG.

“ BIRDIE, Birdie, will you pet?
Summer is far and far away yet.
You'll have silken quilts and a velvet bed,
And a pillow of satin for your head !”

“ I'd rather sleep in the ivy wall ;
No rain comes through, tho' I hear it fall ;
The sun peeps gay at dawn of day,
And I sing and wing away, away !”

“ O Birdie, Birdie, will you pet ?
Diamond-stones, and amber and jet,
We'll string on a necklace fair and fine
To please this pretty bird of mine !”

“ O thanks for diamonds, and thanks for jet,
But here is something daintier yet—
A feather necklace round and round,
That I wouldn't sell for a thousand pound !”

“ O Birdie, Birdie, won’t you pet ? ”
We’ll buy you a dish of silver fret,
A golden cup and an ivory seat,
And carpets soft beneath your feet ! ”

“ Can running water be drunk from gold ?
Can a silver dish the forest hold ?
A rocking twig is the finest chair,
And the softest paths lie through the air,—
Goodbye, goodbye to my lady fair ! ”

W. ALLINGHAM.

A WIFE.

THE wife sat thoughtfully turning over
A book inscribed with the schoolgirl's name ;
A tear, one tear, fell hot on the cover
So quickly closed when her husband came.

He came and he went away—it was nothing ;
With commonplace words upon either side ;
But, just with the sound of the room-door shutting,
A dreadful door in her soul stood wide.

Love she had read of in sweet romances—
Love that could sorrow, but never fail ;
Built her own palace of noble fancies—
All the wide world like a fairy tale.

Bleak and bitter and utterly doleful
Spread to this woman her map of life :
Hour after hour she look'd in her soul, full
Of deep dismay and turbulent strife.

Face in hands, she knelt on the carpet ;
The cloud was loosen'd, the storm-rain fell.
Oh ! life has so much to wilder and warp it,
One poor heart's day what poet could tell ?

W. ALLINGHAM.

GRANDPERE.

OLD grandpère sat in the corner
With his grandchild on his knee,
Looking up at his wrinkled visage,
For his winters were ninety-three.

Fair Eleanor's locks were flaxen,
The old man's once were grey,
But now they were white as the snow-drift
That lay on the bleak highway.

Her summers rolled on as golden
As waves over sunny seas ;
But grandpère could perceive no summers,
The winters alone were his.

He folded his arms around her,
Like winter embracing spring ;
And the angels looked down from heaven,
And smiled on their slumbering.

But soon the angelic faces
Were filled with seraphic light,
As they gazed on a beauteous spirit
Passing up through the frosty night,

Till it stood serene before them,
A youth most divinely fair ;
And they saw that the new-born angel
Was the spirit of old grandpère.

SANGSTER.

THE PHANTOM.

AGAIN I sit within the mansion,
In the old familiar seat ;
And shade and sunshine chase each other
O'er the carpet at my feet.

But the sweetbriar's arms have wrestled
upwards
In the summers that are past,
And the willow trails its branches lower
Than when I saw them last.

They strive to shut the sunshine wholly
From out the haunted room ;
To fill the house that once was joyful
With silence and with gloom.

And many kind remembered faces
Within the doorway come—
Voices that wake the sweeter music
Of one that now is dumb.

They sing, in tones as glad as ever,
The songs she loved to hear,
They braid the rose in summer garlands,
Whose flowers to her were dear.

And still her footsteps in the passage,
 Her blushes at the door,
Her timid words of maiden welcome,
 Come back to me once more.

And, all forgetful of my sorrow,
 Unmindful of my pain,
I think she has but newly left me,
 And soon will come again.

She stays without, perchance, a moment
 To dress her dark-brown hair ;
I hear the rustle of her garments,
 Her light step on the stair !

O fluttering heart ! control thy tumult,
 Lest eyes profane should see
My cheeks betray the rush of rapture
 Her coming brings to me !

She tarries long ; but lo ! a whisper
 Beyond the open door,
And, gliding through the quiet sunshine,
 A shadow on the floor !

Ah ! 'tis the whispering pine that calls me,
 The vine, whose shadow strays ;
And my patient heart must still await her,
 Nor chide her long delays.

But my heart grows sick with weary waiting
 As many a time before :
Her foot is ever at the threshold,
 Yet never passes o'er.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE CHILD LOST.

WHEN evening is closing in all around,
And winds in the dark-bough'd timber sound,
The flame of my candle, dazzling bright,
May shine full clear—full clear may shine,
But never can show my child to sight.

And warm is the bank, where boughs are still,
On timber below the windward hill,
But now, in the stead of summer hay,
Dead leaves are cast—are cast dead leaves
Where lately I saw my child at play.

And oh ! could I see, as may be known
To angels, my little maid full-grown,
As time would have made her, woman tall,
If she had lived—if lived had she,
And not have died now, so young and small.

Do children that go to heaven play ?
Are young that were gay, in heaven gay ?
Are old people bow'd by weak'ning time
In heaven bow'd—all bow'd in heaven ?
Or else are they all in blissful prime ?

Yes, blest with all blessings are the blest,
Their lowest of goods above our best ;
So show me the highest soul you can
In shape and mind—in mind and shape,
Yet far above him is heaven's man.

W. BARNES.

PLORATA VERIS LACHRYMIS.

O now ! my true and dearest bride,
Since thou hast left my lonely side,
My life has lost its hope and zest.
The sun rolls on from east to west,
But brings no more that evening rest
Thy loving-kindness made so sweet,
And time is slow that once was fleet,
As day by day was waning.

The last sad day that shew'd thee lain
Before me, smiling in thy pain,
The sun soar'd high along his way
To mark the longest summer day,
And shew to me the latest play
Of thy sweet smile, and thence, as all
The day's length shrunk from small to small,
My joy began its waning.

And now 'tis keenest pain to see
Whate'er I saw in bliss with thee.
The softest airs that ever blow,
The fairest days that ever glow,
Unfelt by thee, but bring me woe.
And sorrowful I kneel in prayer,
Which thou no longer now canst share,
As day by day is waning.

How can I live my lonesome days?
How can I tread my lonesome ways?
How can I take my lonesome meal?
Or how outlive the grief I feel?
Or how again look on to weal?
Or sit, at rest, before the heat
Of winter fires, to miss thy feet,
When evening light is waning?

Thy voice is still I loved to hear,
Thy voice is lost I held so dear.
Since death unlocks thy hand from mine,
No love awaits me such as thine.
Oh, boon the hardest to resign!
But if we meet again at last
In heaven, I little care how fast
My life may now be waning.

W. BARNES.

THE MOTHER'S DREAM.

I'd a dream to-night,
As I fell asleep—
Oh ! the touching sight
Makes me still to weep,
Of my little lad,
Gone to leave me sad—
Ay, the child I had,
But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,
I my child did seek,
There, in train, came by
Children fair and meek,
Each in lily white,
With a lamp alight ;
Each was clear to sight,
But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,
Came my child in turn,
But the lamp he had,
Oh ! it did not burn ;
He, to clear my doubt,
Said, half-turned about,
“ Your tears put it out ;
Mother, never mourn.”

W. BARNES.

THE VISION OF SHEIK HAMIL.

UP on the terrace Sheik Hamil lay,
In the fort of El-Hamëd, hot in the sun ;
But he heeded not the heat of the day,
Nor how much of its course had run.

The bleat of the sheep came up to his ear,
Now a camel would cry, now a horse would snort,
And the tongues of the women he could hear
As they moved about in the court.

At length there softened and died away
The grind of the mill and the fountain's gush ;
No one moved in the heat of the day,
And there fell on the fort a hush.

All the more that the master there,
Under the shadow by *Asrael* cast,
Had sat apart since the hour of prayer,
And had not broken his fast.

None to Sheik Hamil went near on the days
When his household knew that his soul was sad ;
Though they ceased not to shake the head in
amaze
When such dolorous days he had.

But cause for his grief that day there was,
The wife of his youth had ta'en her leave—
If e'er he had sorrowed without a cause,
Now he had cause to grieve.

Fatima, wife of his youth, was dead—
Of slaves he had many, of wives but one—
“There is but one God for the soul,” he said,
“And but one moon for the sun.”

Now on the terrace he lay and gazed
Afar where the sky and the desert meet,
Beyond the fields where his cattle grazed,
And the gardens stretched at his feet.

Burning and bright was the golden sand—
Burning and blue was the sapphire sky ;
And where they met on the verge of the land
Infinity touched infinity.

Sheik Hamil went up at the hour of prayer,
And there he had wept till the hour of noon,
And what with the weeping and fasting there,
His senses began to swoon.

Now he thought, “Oh, the eye and the head !
I will go down and strengthen mine heart,
I will enter my house and there eat bread,
And take my horse and depart.

‘Joy of the desert will fill me then,
And make mine eyes from their weeping cease ;
The name of God be praised among men,
For my soul shall thus have peace.”

As he had thought, Sheik Hamil did,
Or ever the hour had run its course—
Entered his house, and ate, and bid
Them saddle his swiftest horse.

As he had thought, lo ! it was done,
The horse was brought, and mounted, and sped
In the very hour of the sun which shone,
From the Gate of El-Hamēd.

Into the desert, as he had thought,
Straight he darted, and in the race
Past the wind on its way he shot,
And he turned to look in its face.

The fort had vanished ; for, lo ! between
The horse had measured a mighty space.
Such riding Sheik Hamil had not seen—
And still they went on apace.

Then he looked down, and not from the stall
Had come the steed which he now bestrode :
“God is God,” he breathed, “over all”—
The horse of his youth he rode ;

The horse that had hasted to die for him,
When they reached the wells, and the wells had
dried ;
On whose neck he had wept when his eye grew
dim,
At the water’s brink where he had died.

Had he lived to taste the stream that day ?
He knew not, but stooping he kissed his neck,
And with long light bounds he bore him away
With a speed that knew no check.

Then the delight of the desert filled
Sheik Hamil's soul, and he drank new wine,
And his heart beat high, and his grief was stilled,
And he breathed a life divine.

They journeyed far, and they journeyed fast—
Hamil the Sheik, on that mighty horse,
Saw that the groves and the wells were past,
And that still they held on their course.

At length they came to a shining wall,
And the horse stood still, and turned his head,
And spoke, “ My master, may good befall ;
But I leave thee here,” he said.

The wall was of ruby in mighty blocks,
And over it, blowing through fountains fair,
Came breezes perfumed like scented locks,
But never a gate was there.

And the horse had vanished, and lo ! he stood
Ankle-deep in the drifting sand,
None, and famished for lack of food,
By the wall of this watered land.

An entrance hither thou shalt not win,
If thou seek for a gate these thousand years,
But by naming a name and entering in
When a cleft in the wall appears.”

named the name that is over all,
and, falling forward in fainting pain,
ouched with a touch the ruby wall,
d it cleft at his touch in twain.

And he entered in, and of sweets distilled
 By the trees of God—whose name he praised—
 He ate and drank till his soul was filled,
 And his heart to heaven was raised.

Then the old sadness, the old unrest,
 That ever and ever Sheik Hamil drove
 Into the desert, woke in his breast,
 And he hurried from grove to grove,

Seeking, yet knowing not what he sought.
 To an ivory palace at length he came,
 And the doors were a thousand, of silver wrought,
 Yet not one door was the same.

“ Only one will open to thee,
 And thou mayst not ask is it this or this ?
 But unto none other, by God’s decree,
 Will it open, if thou shouldst miss.”

Thus said the voice, and he, if he missed,
 Knew he must die of his longing sore ;
 “ God is God,” he said, as he kissed,
 And opened the silver door !

And the hand that drew him within and led
 To the ivory seats with cushions of silk,
 By the silver fountain with perfume fed,
 Was Fatima’s hand of milk.

And there she unveiled to him her face,
 Fair as the moon and clear as the day,
 And there on his breast, the filled full of grace,
 The best, the beloved, lay.

It was she who arose and led him still
Through other chambers of life and bliss,
Set forth with all fruits his soul to fill,
And opening all at her kiss.

At length they came to another door,
And, "Here I must enter alone," she said,
And her eyes looked not the same as before
As she kissed, and veiled her head.

And she entered in, and he saw her not
In the dread of the darkness behind that door,
And he felt his feet cleave fast to the spot,
And he swooned on the marble floor.

And lo ! he lay on the drifting sand,
Where a wall of sapphire rose to the sky ;
And beyond the wall was a shining land,
And he saw the beloved fly—

Fly on wings, like the wings of a dove,
Changed to a dove with her wings of white !
Leaving him, faint with the longing of love,
Unable to follow her flight.

And the voice he had heard, holding far aloof,
Said, "Feet may not follow where she has fled."
And he awoke, and a dove rose up from the roof,
And the wife of his youth was dead.

ISA CRAIG KNOX.

THE THREE SONS.

I HAVE a son, a little son, a boy just five years old,
With eyes of thoughtful earnestness, and mind of
gentle mould.
They tell me that unusual grace in all his ways
appears,
That my child is grave and wise of heart beyond
his childish years.
I cannot say how this may be, I know his face is
fair,
And yet his chiefest comeliness is his sweet and
serious air :
I know his heart is kind and fond, I know he
loveth me,
But loveth yet his mother more, with grateful fer-
vency ;
But that which others most admire is the thought
which fills his mind,
The food for grave inquiring speech he everywhere
doth find,
Strange questions doth he ask of me, when we
together walk ;
He scarcely thinks as children think, or talks as
children talk.

Nor cares he much for childish sports, dotes not
on bat or ball,
But looks on manhood's ways and works, and aptly
mimics all.
His little heart is busy still, and oftentimes perplexed
With thoughts about this world of ours, and
thoughts about the next.
He kneels at his dear mother's knee, she teacheth
him to pray,
And strange, and sweet, and solemn then are the
words which he will say.
Oh! should my gentle child be spared to man-
hood's years like me,
A holier and a wiser man I trust that he will be;
And when I look into his eyes, and stroke his
thoughtful brow,
I dare not think what I should feel were I to lose
him now.

II.

I have a son, a second son, a simple child of three
I'll not declare how bright and fair his little
features be,
How silver-sweet those tones of his when he
prattles on my knee;
I do not think his light-blue eye is like his brother's
keen,
Nor his brow so full of childish thought as his
hath ever been;
But his little heart's a fountain pure of kind and
tender feeling,
And his every look's a gleam of light, rich depths
of love revealing.

When he walks with me the country folk, who pass
us in the street,
Will shout for joy, and bless my boy, he looks so
mild and sweet.
A playfellow is he to all, and yet with cheerful tone,
Will sing his little song of love when left to sport
alone.
His presence is like sunshine sent to gladden home
and hearth,
To comfort us in all our griefs, and sweeten all our
mirth.
Should *he* grow up to riper years God grant his
heart may prove
As sweet a home for heavenly grace as now for
earthly love :
And if beside his grave the tears our aching eyes
must dim,
God comfort us for all the love which we shall
lose in him.

III.

I have a son, a third sweet son, his age I cannot
tell,
For they reckon not by years and months where
he is gone to dwell.
To us, for fourteen anxious months, his infant
smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to
live in heaven.
I cannot tell what form is his, what looks he
weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining
seraph brow.
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss
which he doth feel,

Are numbered with the secret things which God
will not reveal.
But I know (for God hath told me this) that he is
now at rest,
Where other blessed infants lie, on their Saviour's
loving breast.
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of
flesh;
But his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of joy
for ever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their
glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of
Heaven's divinest things.
I know that we shall meet our babe (his mother
dear and I)
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from
every eye.
Whate'er befalls his brethren twain, *his* bliss can
never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but *his* is
certain peace.
It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls from
bliss may sever,
But if our own poor faith fail not, *he* must be ours
for ever.
When we think of what our darling is and what we
still must be—
When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss, and
this world's misery—
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel
this grief and pain—
Oh ! we'd rather lose our other two than have him
here again.

J. MOULTRIE.

FAMILY MUSIC.

BESIDE the window I sit alone,
And I watch as the stars come out,
I catch the sweetness of Lucy's tone,
And the mirth of the chorus' shout.
I listen and look on the solemn night
Whilst they stand singing beneath the light.

Lucy looks just like an early rose
(Somebody else is thinking so),
And every day more fair she grows
(Somebody will not say me no),
And she sings like a bird whose heart is bless'd
(And somebody thinks of building a nest !).

And now she chooses another tune,
One that was often sung by me ;—
I do not think that these nights in June
Are half so fine as they used to be ;
Oh ! 'tis colder watching the solemn night
Than standing singing beneath the light.

Lucy, you sing like a silver bell,
Your face is fresh as a morning flower—
Why should you think of the sobs which swell
When leaves fall fast in the autumn bower ?
Rather gather your buds and sing your song,
Their perfume and echo will linger long.

I'm grey and grave, and 'tis quite time too,
I go at leisure along my ways ;
But I know how life appears to you,
I know the words that somebody says :
As old songs are sweet and old words true,
So there's one old story that's always new !

There is a grave that you do not know,
A drawer in my desk that you've never seen,
A page in my life that I never show,
A love in my heart that is always green.
Sing out the old song ! I fear not the pain,—
I sang it once—Lucy, sing it again !

ISABELLA FYVIE.

AS THROUGH THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT.

As through the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
We fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling-out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears !
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave—
Oh, there, above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears !

TENNYSON.

MY VOICE IS HEARD THROUGH ROLLING DRUMS.

My voice is heard through rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands ;
My face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about my knee ;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

TENNYSON.

HOME.

Two birds within one nest,
Two hearts in one breast,
Two spirits in one fair
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch ;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win.
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love within.

DORA GREENWELL.

THE "GRAY SWAN."

"Oh tell me, sailor, tell me true !
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
A-sailing with your ship ?"
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew—
"Your little lad, your Elihu ?"
He said, with trembling lip,—
"What little lad ? What ship ?"

"What little lad ! as there could be
Another such an one as he !
What little lad, do you say ?
Why, Elihu, that took to sea
The moment I put him off my knee !
It was just the other day
The *Gray Swan* sailed away."

"The other day ?" The sailor's eyes
Stood open with a great surprise—
"The other day ? The *Swan* ?"
His heart began in his throat to rise.
"Ay, ay, sir, here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on."
"And so your lad is gone ?"

“Gone with the *Swan*.” “And did she strand,
With her anchor clutching hold of the sand,

For a month, and never stir?”

“Why, to be sure! I’ve seen from the land,
Like a lover kissing his lady’s hand,

The wild sea kissing her—

A sight to remember, sir.”

“But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?

I stood on the *Gray Swan’s* deck,
And to that lad I saw you throw—

Taking it off, as it might be so—

The kerchief from your neck.”

“Ay, and he’ll bring it back!”

“And did the little lawless lad,
That has made you sick and made you sad,

Sail with the *Gray Swan’s* crew?”

“Lawless! the man is going mad!

The best boy ever mother had.

Be sure he sailed with the crew!

What would you have him do?”

“And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign

To say he was alive?”

“Hold! if ‘twas wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine,

And could he write from the grave?

Tut, man! what would you have?

“Gone twenty years—a long, long cruise—
‘Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;

But if the lad still live,

And come back home, think you you can
Forgive him?" "Miserable man,
You're mad as the sea—you rave—
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew
The kerchief. She was wild.
"My God! my Father! is it true?
My little lad, my Elihu!
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead, my living child!"

A. CARY.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER.

INTO the house ran Lettice,
With hair so long and so bright
Crying, "Mother, Johnny has 'listed !
He has 'listed into the fight!"

"Don't talk so wild, little Lettice!"
And she smoothed her darling's brow.
" 'Tis true ! you'll see—as true can be—
He told me so just now!"

"Ah, that's a likely story !
Why, darling, don't you see,
If Johnny had 'listed into the war
He would tell your father and me!"

"But he is going to go, mother,
Whether it is right or wrong ;
He is thinking of it all the while,
And he won't be with us long!"

"Our Johnny going to go to the war?"
"Ay, ay, and the time is near ;
He said when the corn was once in the ground,
We couldn't keep him here."

“ Hush, child ! your brother Johnny
Meant to give you a fright.”

“ Mother, he’ll go—I tell you I know
He’s ‘listed into the fight !

“ Plucking a rose from the bush, he said,
Before its leaves were black
He’d have a soldier’s cap on his head,
And a knapsack on his back !”

“ A dream, a dream, little Lettice !
A wild dream of the night.
Go, find and fetch your brother in,
And he will set us right.”

So out of the house ran Lettice,
Calling near and far—
“ Johnny, tell me, and tell me true,
Are you going to go to the war ?”

At last she came and found him
In the dusty cattle close,
Whistling “ Hail, Columbia !”
And beating time with his rose :

The rose he broke from the bush, when he said,
Before its leaves were black
He’d have a soldier’s cap on his head,
And a knapsack on his back.

Then all in gay mock anger,
He plucked her by the sleeve,
Saying, “ Dear little, sweet little rebel,
I am going by your leave !”

" O Johnny ! Johnny !" low he stooped,
 And kissed her wet cheeks dry,
 And took her golden head in his hands,
 And told her he would not die.

" But, Letty, if anything happen—
 'There wont !' and he spoke more low—
 " But if anything should, you must be twice as
 good
 As you are to mother, you know.

" Not but that you are good, Letty,
 As good as you can be ;
 But then you know it might be so,
 You'd have to be good for me !"

So straight to the house they went, his cheeks
 Flushing under his brim ;
 And his two broad-shouldered oxen
 Turned their great eyes after him.

That night in the good old farmstead
 Was many a sob of pain ;
 " O Johnny, stay ! if you go away,
 It will never be home again."

But Time its still sure comfort lent,
 Crawling, crawling past,
 And Johnny's gallant regiment
 Was going to march at last.

And steadyng up her stricken soul,
 The mother turned about,
 Took what was Johnny's from the drawer
 And shook the rose-leaves out ;

And brought the cap she had lined with silk,
And strapped his knapsack on,
And her heart, though it bled, was proud as she
said,
“ You would hardly know our John !”

Another year, and the roses
Were bright on the bush by the door ;
And into the house ran Lettice,
Her pale cheeks glad once more.

“ O mother ! news has come to-day !
‘Tis flying all about—
Our John’s regiment they say
Is all to be mustered out !

“ O mother ! you must buy me a dress,
And ribbons of blue and buff !
O what shall we say to make the day
Merry and mad enough !

“ The brightest day that ever yet
The sweetest sun looked upon
When we shall be dressed in our very best,
To welcome home our John !”

So up and down ran Lettice,
And all the farmstead rung
With where he would set his bayonet,
And where his cap would be hung.

And the mother put away her look
Of weary, waiting gloom,
And a feast was set, and the neighbours met
To welcome Johnny home.

The good old father silent stood,
With his eager face at the pane ;
And Lettice was out at the door to shout
When she saw him in the lane.

And by-and-by a soldier
Came o'er the grassy hill ;
It was not he they looked to see,
And every heart stood still.

He brought them Johnny's knapsack,
'Twas all that he could do,
And the cap he had worn, begrimed and torn,
With a bullet-hole straight through !

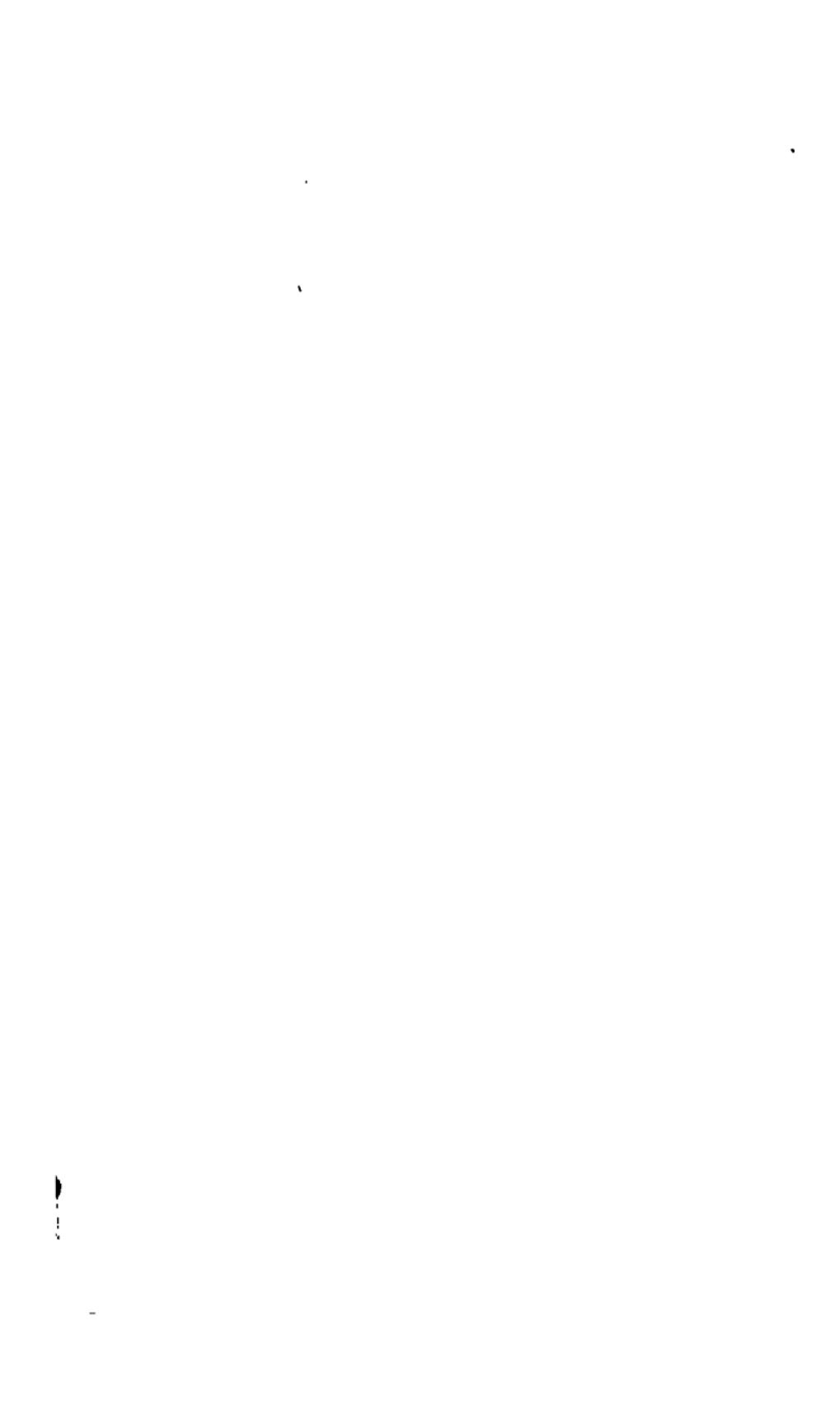
A. CARY.

SHADOWS.

IAD a home wherein the weariest feet
Found sure repose ;
d Hope led on laborious day to meet
Delightful close !
cottage with broad eaves and a thick vine,
A crystal stream,
ose mountain-language was the same as mine—
It was a dream !

ad a home to make the gloomiest heart
Alight with joy,—
temple of chaste love, a place apart
From Time's annoy ;
noonlight scene of life, where all things rude
And harsh did seem
th pity rounded and by grace subdued—
It was a dream !

MILNES.



SECTION III.

**POEMS OF TRAVEL AND
ADVENTURE.**



GRAËLENT'S DESTRIER.

(AN ARMORICAN LEGEND.)

L

HEAVILY tumbles the river, massive and deep it flows,
Fed by the moorland well-springs, fed by the mountain snows.
He were most skilful of slingers, slingling to yonder far brink,
Smiting yon mossy-faced rabbit stooped o'er the water to drink.

II.

Down by the edge of the river, beeches stand solemn and grave,
Dipping their arms in the current, cooling their feet in the wave,
Overhead twisting and lacing, shading green valleys and lawns,
Where the brisk leveret skippeth, where the doe leadeth her fawns.

III.

Through the broad arch of an opening, hammers a
hoof on the sword—
See, 'tis an armed war-charger, prancing in haste to
the ford,
Clad in the steel and the iron—hark! as she leaps,
how it clangs!
Still at the bow of the saddle, rusty the battleaxe
hangs.

IV.

Into the fringe of the ripples gallops the brown
desirer.
Droops her plumed head to the bubbles, scenteth
and snifeth the air,
Turns her proud neck to the breezes, jingles her
saddle-cloth bells,
Looks o'er the turbulent waters, looks to the brakes
and the fells.

V.

See how her eager ears listen, flung back, trans-
parent and thin;
See how her hollow eyes glisten, every vein starts
on her skin.
Who is the lost one she seeketh? Finds she the
wanderer at last,
Tossed in that cockle-shell shallop that close by
the margin has past?

VI.

Nay, 'tis a fisher's skiff—empty; down sinks the
tremulous head,
Mournful her low baffled whinny, slow and re-
luctant her tread;

**Back to the heart of the forest, like one who
follows a corse,
Pacing with funeral trappings, turneth the riderless
horse.**

VII.

This is the day, say the peasants, this is the hour
and the day
When the proud knight of the Bretons hunted a
beautiful fay.
Maddened by passion he chased her over the field
and the wood ;
She with her semblance of coyness mocked him the
nearer he sped.

VIII.

Over the fields like a firefly flitted she, dazzling his
sight,
Invading the thorns and the thickets, scatheless,
the gossamer sprite ;
He on his heavy war-charger crashed down the
leaves and the flowers,
Scattering destruction and havock over the bos-
quets and bowers.

IX.

Faster he followed her flicker, down to this flood
where we stand ;
Here she turned round and defied him, clapping
her rose-petal hand.
Into the wave like a sunbeam, over the shoulders
she leaps—
Hark ! what a plunge went behind her—horse and
man both in the deeps.

X.

Strong was the stalwart young swimmer, stronger
 the masterful tide,
 Heavy the weight of his armour, broadsword and
 axe at his side :
 Swollen the autumn-filled river, vainly the gallant
 horse strives,
 Higher the wild torrent surges over those twain
 noble lives.

XI.

Pity seized hold on her spirit, she who was floating
 so near,
 Safe in her fairy-born nature, never yet chilled by a
 fear :
 “ Knight, thou art truly mine hero ; death for my
 sake didst thou brave.
 Never yet lover was daring to plunge after me in
 this wave.

XII.

“ Come with me, Knight of the Bretons, come
 where no peril invades ;
 Sorrow or pain cannot follow to Avalon’s mystical
 glades.
 Only the generous and noble, only the stainless
 and strong
 Wander on Avalon’s mountains, mingle in Ava-
 lon’s throng.

XIII.

“ Many a poet and hero, vanished away from man-
 kind,
 Dwell in that realm of enchantment, feed on its
 delicate wind.

Over earth's errors and anguish nightly the sun
goeth down;
They have unclouded refulgence, chiefs of immortal
renown."

XIV.

Then o'er the pale swooning horseman tenderly
stooped the bright fay,
Lifted him out of the saddle, bore him unconscious
away.
Lightly her burden she carried, singing for joy as
she sped
Safe from the swift-rolling waters, holding his
helmeted head.

XV.

Fast swept the tide to the ocean, fairy and knight
with it borne,
Floating to Avalon's havens, gates of the glitter-
ing morn.
Struggling for life in the billows left they the
floundering steed :
Ah ! 'twas *not thus* the good charger left her dear
lord at his need.

XVI.

Only herself to be rescued, only her weight to
upbear,
Beating with hoofs and with haunches, battled the
brave destrier.
See, the blood starts from her nostrils ! see, the sweat
pours from her flanks !
Wounded, exhausted, abandoned, at last she has
gained the firm banks.

xvii.

Vainly she watches the waters seeking her lord in
the stream—
Far in the Island of Spirits lies he in Love's happy
dream ;
Never remembers his charger drowning for him in
the flood—
Avalon's founts of oblivion slacken the warrior's
blood.

xviii.

Ages have gone, say the peasants, over the river's
broad breast—
Never from Avalon's hills comes the flaunt of that
cavalier's crest ;
Happy, forgetful, enamoured, he cares not as time
flows away.
Only the faithful war-charger remembers the hour
and the day.

xix.

Then from the heart of the forest, where she hath
wandered unseen,
Groomed by the rough-fingered breezes, wild-eyed,
and shaggy, and lean,
All her rich panoply rusted, her broidery trailing
the sward,
Down to the banks of the river comes she to seek
her lost lord.

L'ENVOI.

xx.

This is a legend—a fable—fit but for telling at eve ;
Into its mystical tissue truth of mine own let me
weave—

Dreams of a love lost for ever, rapt like that knight
from his steed—
Dreams of a pitiless rival robbing my heart at its
need.

XXI.

Ah, my love! long, long behind us fade out the
hour and the day
When at the touch of a stranger swiftly thou'st
vanished away;
I in the buffeting billows gasped for my life in
despair,
Staggering alone to the strand like the warrior's
brave destrier.

XXII.

Who in the lap of enchantments reckons the days
that go forth,
Avalon's magical fountains drown all the murmurs
of earth :
Thou in thy bliss hast forgotten, I in my loneliness
hold
Every faint track of the journey we travelled to-
gether of old.

XXIII.

Still as the moment returneth haunt I that desolate
place,
Where in the clasp of the stranger I caught the last
gleam of thy face.
From wilderness-wolds I must traverse, from sorrows
thou never canst share,
I come like the knight's faithful charger, with the
love of the knight's destrier.

MRS. OGILVY.

IVRY.

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all
glories are !
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of
Navarre !
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of
dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh
pleasant land of France !
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city
of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning
daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our
joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought
thy walls annoy.
Hurrah ! hurrah ! a single field hath turned the
chance of war,
Hurrah ! hurrah ! for Ivry and Henry of Navarre.

Oh ! how our hearts were beating, when, at the
dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long
array ;

With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land ;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand :
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood ;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armour drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye ;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save our Lord the King !"
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,

Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst
the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Na-
varre."

Hurrah ! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled
din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring
culverin.
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint-Andre's
plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and
Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,
Charge for the golden lilies,—upon them with the
lance.
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand
spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the
snow-white crest ;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like
a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of
Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne
hath turned his rein.
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish
count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a
Biscay gale ;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags,
and cloven mail.

And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along
our van,
“ Remember St. Bartholomew,” was passed from
man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry, “ No Frenchman is
my foe :
Down, down, with every foreigner, but let your
brethren go.”
Oh ! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or
in war,
As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier
of Navarre ?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought
for France to-day ;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a
prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in
fight ;
And the good Lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet
white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath
ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false
Lorraine.
Up with it high ; unfurl it wide ; that all the host
may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which
wrought His church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their
loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a foot-cloth meet for Henry
of Navarre.

Ho ! maidens of Vienna ; ho ! matrons of Lucerne ;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who
never shall return.
Ho ! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp's monks may sing a mass for thy
poor spearmen's souls.
Ho ! gallant nobles of the League, look that your
arms be bright ;
Ho ! burghers of Saint-Geneviève, keep watch and
ward to-night.
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God
hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the
valour of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories
are ;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of
Navarre.

LORD MACAULAY.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

[16—.]

I.

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;
“Good speed !” cried the watch, as the gate bolts
undrew ;
“Speed !” echoed the wall to us galloping through ;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

II.

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our
place.

I turned in my saddle, and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

III.

‘twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near
okeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
 At Düffield, 'twas morning as plain as could be ;
 And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the
 half-chime,
 So Joris broke silence with " Yet there is time ! "

IV.

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
 And against him the cattle stood black every one,
 To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
 And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
 With resolute shoulders, each butting away
 The haze, as some bluff river-headland its spray.

V.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear
 bent back
 For my voice, and the other pricked out on his
 track ;
 And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance,
 O'er its white edge, at me, his own master, askance !
 And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and
 anon
 His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

VI.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay
 spur !
 Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
 We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick
 wheeze
 Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering
 knees,
 And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
 As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

VII.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the
sky ;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle, bright stubble
like chaff ;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, " for Aix is in sight."

VIII.

" How they'll greet us !"—and all in a moment his
roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her
fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

IX.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let
fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without
peer ;
Clapped my hands, laughed, and sang, any noise,
bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

X.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round,
As I sate with his head 'twixt my knees on the
ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of
wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news
from Ghent.

R. BROWNING.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP.

You know we French stormed Ratisbon :
 A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoléon
 Stood on one storming day,
With neck out-thrust—you fancy how—
 Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
 Oppressive with its mind.

Just as, perhaps, he mused, “ My plans
 That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
 Waver at yonder wall,”
Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew
 A rider, bound on bound,
Full galloping, nor bridle drew
 Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
 And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
 You hardly could suspect,

(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarcely any blood came through),
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace,
We've got you Ratisbon!
The marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon,
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed, his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed, but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes.
"You're wounded!" "Nay," his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said,
"I'm killed, sire!" and, his chief beside,
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

R. BROWNING.

THE BATTLE OF DRUMLIEMOOR.

(NORTH COAST—COVENANT PERIOD.)

I.

BAR the door ! put out the light, for it gleams across
the night,
And guides the bloody motion of their feet ;
Hush the bairn upon thy breast, lest it guide them
in their quest ;
And with water quench the blazing of the peat.
Now, wife, sit still and hark !—hold my hand amid
the dark ;
O Jeanie, we are scattered e'en as sleet !

II.

It was down on Drumliemoor, where it slopes upon
the shore,
And looks upon the white surf of the bay,
In the kirkyard of the dead, where the heather is
turned red
By the bloody clan that sleep beneath the clay ;
And the Howiesons were there, and the people of
Glen Ayr,
And we gathered in the dark o' night to pray.

III.

How I sit at home in fear when God's voice was in
mine ear.

When the priests of Baal were slaughering his
sheep?

Nay, there I took my stand, with my reap-hook in
my hand,

For bloody was the sheaf that I might reap;
And the Lord was in His skies with a thousand
dreadful eyes.

And His breathing made a trouble on the deep.

IV.

Each mortal of the band brought his weapon in his
hand,

Though the chopper or the spit was all he bare;
And not a man but knew the work he had to do,
If the Fiend should fall upon us unaware.

And our looks were ghastly white, but it was not
with affright,

For we knew the Lord was heark'ning to our
prayer.

V.

Oh, solemn, sad, and slow, rose the stern voice of
Munroe,

And he cursed the curse of Babylon, the Whore;
And we could not see his face, but a gleam was in
its place.

Like the phosphor of the foam upon the shore;
And the eyes of all were dim as they fixed them-
selves on him.

And the sea filled up the pauses with its roar.

VI.

And when, with accents calm, Kilmahoe gave out
the psalm,
And the sweetness of God's voice was on his
tongue,
With one voice we praised the Lord of the fire and
of the sword,
And louder than the winter wind it rung ;
And across the stars on high went the reek of
vapour by,
And a white mist drifted round us as we sung.

VII.

It was terrible to hear our cry rise deep and clear,
Though we could not see the criers of the cry,
And we sang and gripped our brands, and touched
each other's hands,
While a thin sleet smote our faces from the sky ;
And, sudden, strange, and low, hissed the accents
of Munroe,
“ Grip your weapons ! Yea, be silent ! They
are nigh ! ”

VIII.

And heark'ning, with clenched teeth, we could hear
across the heath
The tramping of the horses as they flew,
And no man breathed a breath, but all were still
as death,
And close together shivering we drew ;
And deeper round us fell all the eyeless gloom of
hell,
And the Fiend was in among us ere we knew.

IX.

Then a shriek of men arose, and the cursing of our foes—

No face of friend or foeman could we mark ;
 But I struck and kept my stand, trusting God to
 guide my hand,
 And struck, and struck, and heard the hell-hounds .
 bark;
 And I fell beneath a horse, but I reached with all
 my force,
 And ripped him with my reap-hook through the
 dark.

X.

As we struggled, knowing not whose hand was at
 our throat,

Whose blood was spouting warm into our eyes,
 We felt the thick snow-drift swoop upon us from
 the rift,

And murmur in the pauses of our cries ;
 But lo ! before we wist, rose the black reek and the
 mist,
 And the pale Moon made a glamour from the
 skies.

XI.

O God ! it was a sight that made the hair turn
 white,

That withered up the heart's blood into woe,
 To see the faces loom in the dimly-lighted gloom,
 And the dead men lying bloodily below ;
 While melting, with no sound, fell with gentleness
 around

The white peace and the wonder of the Snow !

XII.

Ay, and thicker, thicker, poured the pale silence
of the Lord ;

From the hollow of His hand we saw it shed,
And it thickened round us there, till we choked and
gasped for air,

And beneath was ankle-deep and stainèd red ;
And soon, whatever wight was smitten down in
fight

Was buried in the drift ere he was dead.

XIII.

Then we beheld at length the troopers in their
strength,

For faster, faster, faster, up they streamed,
And their pistols flashing bright showed their faces
ashen white,

And their blue steel caught the driving moon and
gleamed.

And a dying voice cried, " Fly !" and behold, e'en
at the cry,

A panic fell upon us, and we screamed !

XIV.

Oh, shrill and awful rose, 'mid the splashing blood
and blows,

Our scream unto the Lord that let us die ;
And the Fiend amid us roared his defiance at the
Lord,

And his servants slew the strong man 'mid his
cry ;

And the Lord kept still in heaven, and the only
answer given

Was the white Snow falling, falling, from the sky.

XV.

Then we fled ! the darkness grew ! 'mid the driving
cold we flew,
Each alone, yea, each for those whom he held
dear ;
And I heard upon the wind the thud of hoofs
behind,
And the scream of those who perished in their
fear ;
But I knew by heart each path through the dark-
ness of the strath,
And I hid myself at dawn, and I am here.

XVI.

Ah ! gathered in one fold be the holy men and old,
And beside them lie the cursèd and the proud ;
The Howiesons are there, and the people of Glen
Ayr,
Kirkpatrick, and Macdonald, and Macleod.
And while the widow groans, lo ! God's hand
around the bones
His thin ice windeth softly as a shroud.

XVII.

Ay, on mountain and in vale our women will look
pale,
And palest when the ocean surges boom ;
Buried 'neath snow-drift white, with no holy prayer
or rite,
Lie the lovèd ones they look for in the gloom ;
And deeper, deeper still, drops the snow on vale
and hill,
And deeper, and yet deeper is their Tomb !

R. BUCHANAN.

URRARD.

N just such an evening down long Garry stream,
wo centuries gone, fell the sun's setting gleam,
hat saw from this braeside the wild battle roll,
nd bear from the earth Scotland's gallantest soul.

ong poised on Craighallaig, like ears on their eyry,
hey waited—Clanranald, Lochiel, and Glengarry—
ill the sun touched yon hills, and Dundee gave
the word,
nd himself to the van on his black charger spurred.

own the hill-side they plunge like swoln torrents
descending.

room and birch 'neath their headlong tramp crash-
ing and rending
nd casting their plaids by the fail dykes of
Urrard,
ush claymore and war-axe resistlessly forward.

se the Gael, 'mid the red ranks ! from helmet to
heel,
hey are cleaving them down with their merciless
steel,
ill far through yon dark pass, all jagged and
riven,
.oars the flight and the carnage confusedly driven.

Stay, stay, ye wild Athol men, cease your pursuing ;
What boots now to drive your foes headlong to ruin ?
Here stretched on yon knoll, 'gainst the red-setting
day.

The life that ye lived by, ebbs fleetly away.

Oh ! just in the moment when victory crowned him,
Rang out from yon casement the death-shot that
found him ;

Yet leal to the last, faltered gallant Dundee,
" If it's well with the king, little matters for me."

In a plaid wrap him round, bear him quickly to
Blair,
Lay him down, let him rest 'neath the lowly kirk
there.

His wild work is over, God wills there shall shine
O'er the vext hills of Scotland a day more benign.

But whenever ye reckon the count of his guilt—
The innocent blood by his reckless sword spilt—
Remember that last word which flashed out the
whole
Life-aim that o'ermastered his chivalrous soul.

J. C. SHARP.

THE MERMAID OF SAMSÖ.

HIGH roll the raging billows, the tempest wild prevails,
And fierce upon the Baltic beat the equinoctial gales ;
The sharp south-easter hurls the wave on Samsö's dreary shore ;
A little fishing-boat is borne the maddened waters o'er.

Down to the stormy ocean the feeble mast has dipped,
While from the foam-washed yard-arm the riven sail is stripped.
The fisherman sits at the helm, his son beside the prow,
Keen is the glance with which they mark the boiling gulf below.

Then loudly cries the fisher-boy amid the surge's roar,
“I see a snow-white water-fowl I never saw before ;
It heeds not wind or billows, it cares not how they rave,
But sits, a tall and slender shape, upon the towering wave.”

Rang high the father's accents, "Thou blessed God
be near!"

It is a demon of the deep that sails beside us
here.

Now it behoves to battle with the Evil Spirit's lies,
When, like a swimming serpent, the Mermaid meets
our eyes!"

So spake the ancient fisherman, and on he urged
his way.

"God grant the baneful creature may not make
of us her prey!"

His voice was drowned in tempest that drove them
towards land;

The boat's prow pointing bravely to Samsö's sullen
strand.

Yet nearer still, and nearer the fatal woman speeds;
Her head with garlands crested of sea-drift and of
reeds;

She shrieks like the sea-raven, when struggling with
the storm—

Half-woman and half-serpent appears the wondrous
form.

As light as flies a bird in air she flies across the
sea,

Now in the hell of waters she hides herself from
thee,

Now on the billow's summit thou will see her wildly
swim,

With outstretched hand and fingers like sea-eagle's
talons grim.

So fearless and so cheerless o'er the surges does
she ride,
And steers her course in safety, the ocean's ghastly
bride ;
Flung on the gale, her tresses like a banner wildly
wave,
Behind her, wind and waters with redoubled fury
rave.

Strange shows her visage, scarcely seen amid the
storm's eclipse,
And sunny smiles and sullen frowns are blended
round her lips ;
As mobile as the billow that rolls and rages there,
Sometimes she seems a sea-fiend, sometimes a
maiden fair.

And when at last she neared the boat upon the
surge's roar,
A wondrous sight was witnessed—a sight unseen
before ;
For in the twinkling of an eye had passed the wild
turmoil,
The tempest ceased to thunder, and the deep was
smooth as oil.

Then, beckoning, the Mermaid broke forth in
solemn tone,
While o'er the hushed and silent sea her voice was
heard alone.
All strangely gleamed the waters in the even's
lustre red,
And moss-grown shapes came peering out from
ocean's hollow bed.

The sea-brood swift assembled when they heard
their sister's song—
The crowd of living marvels that to the waves
belong—
In all unwonted harmony they gathered as the
sound
Of those strange notes the entrance to their native
caverns found.

"Women of all the loveliest," so rang the Mer-
maid's strain,
"In deep abysses wander beneath the sounding
main ;
No winter's cold is piercing, no icicle is seen
Where dances ocean's maiden upon her floor so
green.

"And she has wondrous treasures to the upper
world unknown ;
Along the emerald pavement of her palace they
are strewn,
Where lilies and anemones, and pearly clusters fair
Grow side by side with blossoms of the coral rich
and rare.

"But life pervades the lilies, and they move like
breathing things,
While round the rocks the sea-snake coils his green
and glittering rings,
And if I beckon with my hand his changeful colours
flee,
They pale and fade from off him when he tamely
comes to me.

“The tempests only play upon the surface of the deep,
But never reach the under-world, where we so safely sleep ;
Like church bells in the distance sound the billows rolling high,
Then seizes us a yearning strange—we know not whence or why.

“But when the blast awakens, and on in fury speeds,
I saddle in the moonlight the wildest of my steeds,
And if amid the surf I see some stately frigate’s form,
Then loudly rings my laughter through the thunder of the storm.

“Against the ship my raven locks I toss athwart the gloom,
And if thy heart be trembling then destruction is thy doom ;
For high in air I lift my arms above the warring wave,
And from the deck I drag thee down into an ocean grave.

“But if thy courage fail thee not, I smile upon thy path,
The Mermaid spares the sailor bold, nor lets him know her wrath ;
A new soul will trample down the fiercest foeman’s might.
I love the brave one who can gaze on death without affright.”

Thus flowed the Mermaid's melody till daylight
passed away,
And like a ghost she disappeared in misty shadows
grey ;
Then waked once more the sleeping surge, and
madly lashed the strand,
In vain—the rescued fisher-boat lay safely on the
land.

HAUCH.

THE NOBLE MERCER.

WINSTANLEY's deed, you kindly folk,
With it I fill my lay,
And a nobler man ne'er walked the world,
Let his name be what it may.

The good ship *Snowdrop* tarried long,
Up at the fane look'd he ;
"Belike," he said, for the wind had dropp'd,
"She lieth becalm'd at sea."

The lovely ladies flock'd within,
And still would each one say,
"Good Mercer, be the ships come up ?"
But still he answer'd, " Nay."

Then stepp'd two mariners down the street,
With looks of grief and fear :
" Now, if Winstanley be your name,
We bring you evil cheer !

" For the good ship *Snowdrop* struck—she struck
On the rock—the Eddystone,
And down she went with threescore men,
We two being left alone.

“Down in the deep with freight and crew
Past any help she lies,
And never a bale has come to shore
Of all thy merchandise.”

“For cloth o’ gold and comely frieze,”
Winstanley said, and sigh’d,
“For velvet coif, or costly coat,
They fathoms deep may bide.

“O thou brave skipper, blithe and kind!
O mariners bold and true,
Sorry at heart, right sorry am I,
A-thinking of yours and you.

“Many long days Winstanley’s breast
Shall feel a weight within,
For a waft of wind he shall be fear’d,
And trading count but sin.

“To him no more it shall be joy
To pace the cheerful town,
And see the lovely ladies gay
Step on in velvet gown.”

The *Snowdrop* sank at Lammas-tide,
All under the yeasty spray,
On Christmas Eve the brig *Content*
Was also cast away.

He little thought o’ New Year’s Night,
So jolly as he sat then,
While drank the toast, and praised the roast,
The round-faced aldermen,—

While serving lads ran to and fro
Pouring the ruby wine,
And jellies trembled on the board,
And towering pasties fine,—

While loud huzzas ran up the roof
Till the lamps did rock o'erhead,
And holly boughs from rafters hung
Dropped down their berries red,—

He little thought on Plymouth Hoe,
With every rising tide,
How the wave wash'd in his sailor lads,
And laid them side by side.

There stepp'd a stranger to the board :
“ Now, stranger, who be ye ? ”
He look'd to right, he look'd to left,
And “ Rest you merry,” quoth he ;

“ For you did not see the brig go down,
Or ever a storm had blown ;
For you did not see the white wave rear
At the rock—the Eddystone.

“ She drove at the rock with sternsails set ;
Crash went the masts in twain ;
She stagger'd back with her mortal blow,
Then leap'd at it again.

“ There rose a great cry, bitter and strong,
The misty moon look'd out !
And the water swarm'd with seamen's heads,
And the wreck was strew'd about.

“ I saw her mainsail lash the sea,
As I clung to the rock alone ;
Then she heel’d over, and down she went
And sank like any stone.

“ She was a fair ship, but all’s one !
For nought could bide the shock.”
“ I will take horse,” Winstanley said,
“ And see this deadly rock.

“ For never again shall barque o’ mine
Sail over the windy sea,
Unless, by the blessing of God, for this
Be found a remedy.”

Winstanley rode to Plymouth town
All in the sleet and the snow,
And he look’d around on shore and sound
As he stood on Plymouth Hoe.

Till a pillar of spray rose far away,
And shot up its stately head,
Rear’d and fell over, and rear’d again :
“ ’Tis the rock ! the rock !” he said.

Straight to the Mayor he took his way,
“ Good Master Mayor,” quoth he,
“ I am a mercer of London town,
And owner of vessels three,—

“ But for your rock of dark renown,
I had five to track the main.”
“ You are one of many,” the old Mayor said,
“ That of the rock complain.

“ An ill rock, mercer ! Your words ring right ;
Well with my thoughts they chime,
For my two sons to the world to come
It sent before their time.”

“ Lend me a lighter, good Master Mayor,
And a score of shipwrights free,
For I think to raise a lantern tower
On this rock o’ destiny.”

The old Mayor laugh’d, but sigh’d also ;
“ Ah ! youth,” quoth he, “ is rash ;
Sooner, young man, thou’lt root it out
From the sea that doth it lash.

“ Who sails too near its jagged teeth,
He shall have evil lot ;
For the calmest seas that tumble there
Froth like a boiling pot.

“ And the heavier seas few look on nigh,
But straight they lay him dead ;
A seventy-gun ship, sir !—they’ll shoot
Higher than her mast-head.

“ O beacons sighted in the dark,
They are right welcome things,
And pitch-pots flaming on the shore,
Show fair as angel wings !

“ Hast gold in hand ?—then light the land,
It ’longs to thee and me ;
But let alone the deadly rock—
In God Almighty’s sea.”

Yet said he, “ Nay—I must away,
On the rock to set my feet ;
My debts are paid, my will I made,
Or ever I did thee greet.

“ If I must die, then let me die
By the rock and not elsewhere ;
If I may live, O let me live
To mount my light-house stair.”

The old Mayor look'd him in the face,
And answer'd : “ Have thy way ;
Thy heart is stout, as if round about
It was braced with an iron stay.

“ Have thy will, mercer ; choose thy men,
Put off from the storm-rid shore ;
God with thee be, or I shall see
Thy face and theirs no more.”

Heavily plunged the breaking wave,
And foam flew up the lea,
Morning and even the drifted snow
Fell into the dark grey sea.

Winstanley choose him men and gear ;
He said, “ My time I waste,”
For the seas ran seething up the shore,
And the wrack drove on in haste.

But he waited twenty days and more,
Pacing the strand alone,
Or ever he set his manly foot
On the rock—the Eddystone.

Then he and the sea began their strife,
And work'd with power and might:
Whatever the man rear'd up by day
The sea broke down by night.

He wrought at ebb with bar and beam,
He sail'd to shore at flow,
And at his side, by that same tide,
Came bar and beam also.

" Give in, give in," the old Mayor cried,
" Or thou wilt rue the day."
" Yonder he goes," the townsfolk sighed,
" But the rock will have its way."

" For all his looks that are so stout,
And his speeches brave and fair,
He may wait on the wind, wait on the wave
But he'll build no light-house there."

In fine weather and foul weather
The rock his arts did flout,
Through the long days and the short days,
Till all that year ran out.

With fine weather and foul weather
Another year came in :
" To take its wage," the workmen said,
" Doth almost seem a sin."

Now March was gone, came April in,
And a sea-fog settled down,
And forth sailed he on a glassy sea,
He sail'd from Plymouth town.

With men and stores he put to sea,
As he was wont to do ;
They show'd in the fog like ghosts full faint—
A ghostly craft and crew.

And the sea-fog lay and wax'd alway,
For a long eight days and more ;
“God help our men,” quoth the women then ;
“For they bide long from shore.”

They paced the Hoe in doubt and dread :
“Where may our mariners be ?”
But the brooding fog lay soft as down
Over the quiet sea.

A Scottish schooner made the port,
The thirteenth day at e'en :
“As I am a man,” the captain cried,
“A strange sight I have seen :

“And a strange sound heard, my masters all,
At sea, in the fog and the rain,
Like shipwrights' hammers tapping low,
Then loud, then low again.

“And a stately house one instant show'd
Through a rift, on the vessel's lee ;
What manner of creatures may be those
That build upon the sea ?”

Then sigh'd the folk, “The Lord be praised !”
And they flock'd to the shore amain ;
All over the Hoe that live-long night,
Many stood out in the rain.

It ceas'd, and the red sun rear'd his head,
And the rolling fog did flee,
And, lo! in the offing faint and far,
Winstanley's house at sea.

In fair weather with mirth and cheer
The stately tower uprose ;
In foul weather, with hunger and cold,
They were content to close ;

Till up the stairs Winstanley went
To fire the wick afar ;
And Plymouth in the silent night
Look'd out, and saw her star.

Winstanley set his foot ashore :
Said he, " My work is done ;
I hold it strong to last as long
As aught beneath the sun.

" But if it fail, as fail it may,
Borne down with ruin and rout,
Another than I shall rear it high,
And brace the girders stout.

" A better than I shall rear it high,
For now the way is plain,
And though I were dead," Winstanley said,
" The light would shine again.

" Yet, were I fain still to remain,
Watch in my tower to keep,
And tend my light in the stormiest night
That ever did move the deep ;

“ And if it stood, why then 'twere good,
Amid their tremulous stirs,
To count each stroke when the mad waves broke
For cheers of mariners.

“ But if it fell, then this were well,
That I should with it fall ;
Since, for my part, I have built my heart
In the courses of its wall.

“ Ay ! I were fain long to remain,
Watch in my tower to keep,
And tend my light in the stormiest night
That ever did move the deep.”

With that Winstanley went his way,
And left the rock renown'd,
And summer and winter his pilot star
Hung bright o'er Plymouth Sound.

But it fell out, fell out at last,
That he would put to sea,
To scan once more his lighthouse tower
On the rock o' destiny.

And the winds woke, and the storm broke,
And wrecks came plunging in ;
None in the town that night lay down
Or sleep or rest to win.

The great mad waves were rolling graves,
And each flung up its dead ;
The seething flow was white below,
And black the sky o'erhead.

And when the dawn, the dull, grey dawn,
Broke on the trembling town,
And men look'd south to the harbour mouth,
The lighthouse tower was down,

Down in the deep where he doth sleep,
Who made it shine afar,
And then in the night that drown'd its light,
Set, with his pilot star.

Many fair tombs in the glorious glooms
At Westminster they show ;
The brave and the great lie there in state :—
Winstanley lieth low.

JEAN INGELOW.

LEGEND OF THE CORIEVRECHAN.

PRINCE BREACAN of Denmark was lord of the
strand,
And lord of the billowy sea ;
Lord of the sea and lord of the land,
He might have let maidens be.

A maiden he met with locks of gold,
Astray by the billowy sea :
Maidens listened in days of old,
And repented grievously.

Wiser he left her in sorrows and wiles.
He went sailing over the sea,
And came to the Lord of the Western Isles :
“ Now give me thy daughter,” said he.

The Lord of the Isles he rose and said :
“ If thou art not a king of the sea,
Think not the Maid of the Islands to wed,
She is too good for thee.

“ Hold thine own three nights and days
In this whirlpool of the sea—
Or turn thy prow and go thy ways,
And let the sea-maiden be.

Prince Breacan he turned his sea-dog prow,
To Denmark over the sea.
“ Wise women,” he said, “ now tell me how
In yon whirlpool to anchor me.”

“ Make a cable of hemp, and a cable of wool,
And a cable of maidens’ hair ;
And hie thee back to the roaring pool,
And anchor in safety there.

“ The smiths for love, on the eve of Yule,
Will forge thee three anchors rare ;
Thou shalt gather the hemp, and shear the wool,
And the maidens will bring their hair.

“ Of the hair that is brown thou shalt twist one
strand,
Of the hair that is raven another ;
Of the golden hair thou shalt twine a band
To bind the one to the other.”

He gathered the hemp, and he shore the wool,
And the maidens brought their hair,
To hold him fast in the roaring pool
By three anchors of iron rare.

He twisted the brown hair for one strand,
And the raven hair for another ;
He twined the golden hair in a band,
To bind the one to the other.

He took the cables of hemp and wool,
 He took the cable of hair,
And he hied him back to the roaring pool,
 And cast the three anchors there.

The whirlpool roared ; and the day went by ;
 And night came down on the sea ;
But or ever the morning broke the sky,
 The hemp had broken in three.

The night it came down ; the whirlpool it ran ;
 The wind it fiercely blew ;
And or ever the second morning began,
 The wool had parted in two.

The storm it roared all day the third,
 And the whirlpool reeled about ;
The night came down like a wild black bird—
 But the cable of hair held out.

Round and around with a giddy swing,
 Went the sea-king through the dark ;
And round went the rope in the swivel-ring,
 And round went the straining bark.

Prince Breacan he sat by the good boat's prow,
 A lantern in his hand :
“ Blest be the maidens of Denmark now !
 By them shall Denmark stand ! ”

He watched the rope through the tempest black,
 A lantern in his hold :
“ Out, out, alack ! one strand will crack ;—
 And it is of shining gold ! ”

The third morn, clear and calm, came out—
Nor lord nor ship was there!
For the golden strand in the cable stout
Was not all of maidens' hair.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

THE FIGHT OF PASO DEL MAR.

GUSTY and raw was the morning,
A fog hung over the seas,
And its grey skirts, rolling inland,
Were torn by the mountain trees ;
No sound was heard but the dashing
Of waves on the sandy bar,
When Pablo of San Diego
Rode down to the Paso del Mar.

The pescador, out in his shallop,
Gathering his harvest so wide,
Sees the dim bulk of the headland
Loom over the waste of the tide ;
He sees, like a white thread, the pathway
Wind round on the terrible wall,
Where the faint, moving speck of the rider
Seems hovering close to its fall.

Stout Pablo of San Diego
Rode down from the hills behind ;
With the bells on his grey mule tinkling,
He sang through the fog and wind.

Under his thick, misted eyebrows
Twinkled his eyes like a star,
And fierce he sang as the sea-winds
Drove cold on the Paso del Mar.

Now Bernal, the herdsman of Chino,
Had travelled the shore since dawn,
Leaving the ranches behind him—
Good reason had he to be gone !
The blood was still red on his dagger,
The fury was hot in his brain,
And the chill, driving scud of the breakers
Beat thick on his forehead in vain.

With his poncho wrapped gloomily round him,
He mounted the dizzying road,
And the chasms and steeps of the headland
Were slippery and wet, as he trod.
Wild swept the wind of the ocean,
Rolling the fog from afar,
When near him a mule-bell came tinkling,
Midway on the Paso del Mar.

“ Back ! ” shouted Bernal, full fiercely,
And “ Back ! ” shouted Pablo, in wrath,
As his mule halted, startled and shrinking,
On the perilous line of the path.
The roar of devouring surges
Came up from the breakers’ hoarse war ;
And “ Back, or you perish ! ” cried Bernal,
“ I turn not on Paso del Mar ! ”

The grey mule stood firm as the headland ;
He clutched at the jingling rein,
When Pablo rose up in his saddle
And smote till he dropped it again.

A wild oath of passion swore Bernal,
And brandished his dagger, still red ;
While fiercely stout Pablo leaned forward,
And fought o'er his trusty mule's head.

They fought till the black wall below them
Shone red through the misty blast ;
Stout Pablo then struck, leaning farther,
The broad breast of Bernal at last.
And, frenzied with pain, the swart herdsman
Closed on him with terrible strength,
And jerked him, despite of his struggles,
Down from the saddle at length.

They grappled with desperate madness
On the slippery edge of the wall ;
They swayed on the brink, and together
Reeled out to the rush of the fall.
A cry of the wildest death-anguish
Rang faint through the mist afar,
And the riderless mule went homeward
From the fight of the Paso del Mar.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

OMĀR AND THE PERSIAN.

HE victor stood beside the spoil, and by the
grinning dead :
The land is ours, the foe is ours ; now rest, my
men," he said.
But while he spoke there came a band of foot-sore,
panting men :
The latest prisoner, my lord, we took him in the
glen,
And left behind dead hostages that we would come
again."

He victor spoke : " Thou, Persian dog ! hast cost
more lives than thine.
What was thy will, and thou shouldst die full thrice,
if I had mine.
Ost know thy fate, thy just reward ? " The Per-
sian bent his head,
I know both sides of victory, and only grieve," he
said,
Because there will be none to fight 'gainst thee
when I am dead.

"No Persian faints at sight of Death, we know
 his face too well,—
 He waits for us on mountain side, in town, or
 shelter'd dell;
 But yet I crave a cup of wine, thy first and latest
 boon,
 For I have gone three days athirst, and fear lest I
 may swoon,
 Or even wrong mine enemy by dying now, too
 soon."

The cup was brought; but ere he drank the Per-
 sian shudder'd white.
 Omär replied, "What fearest thou? The wine is
 clear and bright;
 We are no poisoners, not we; nor traitors to a
 guest;
 No dart behind, nor dart within, shall pierce thy
 gallant breast;
 Till thou hast drain'd the draught, O foe! thou
 dost in safety rest."

The Persian smiled, with parchèd lips, upon the
 foemen round,
 Then poured the precious liquid out, untasted, on
 the ground.
 "Till that is drunk, I live," said he, "and while I
 live, I fight;
 So, see you to your victory, for 'tis undone this
 night;
 Omär, the worthy, battle fair is but thy god-like
 right."

Up sprang a wrathful army then,—Omàr restrained
them all,
Upon no battle-field had rung more clear his
martial call,
The dead men's hair beside his feet as by a breeze
was stirred,
The furthest henchman in the camp the noble man-
date heard :
“ Hold ! if there be a sacred thing, it is the warrior's
word.”

SADIE.

MISTRAL MIREIO:
A PASSAGE FROM A PROVENÇAL POEM.
(TRANSLATED BY GRANT.)

ACCORDINGLY she soon
Perceived a well with a stone cover
Shining in the distance. Like a martin
Through a shower of rain, she through

The flaming sunbeams flew to it.
It was an ancient well with ivy overgrown,
At which the flocks were watered.
By it, in the scanty shade
One of its sides afforded, sat
A little boy at play. Beside him
Was a basket full of small white snails.

The child was one by one withdrawing,
With his little brown hand, from the basket
The poor little harvest-snails, and singing to them,
“ Snaily, snaily, little nun,
Quickly come out from your cell,
Quickly show your little horns,
Or I'll break your convent walls.”

The lovely Crau maid, who had dipped
Both lips and face into the bucket, looked up,
With her rosy visage flushed with running
Now, and said, "Why, little one !
What are you doing here ?" A slight pause.
"Picking snailies off the stones and grass?"—
"Thou'st rightly guessed," the child said.

"See how many I have !
I have harvest-snails, nuns, and *platello*."
"And you eat them?"—"I? Not I!
Oh, Friday's mother carries them to Arles
To sell, and brings us back delicious soft bread.
Hast thou ever been to Arles?"
"No, never."—"What! hast never been to Arles?

"I speaking to thee have !
Ah, poor young lady ! If thou knewst
What a large town Arles is !
How Arles spreads and covers
All the wide Rhone's seven mouths !
Arles has sea-cattle grazing on the islands
Of her lakes ! Arles has sea-horses !

"In one summer Arles yields corn enough
To keep her seven years. She's fishermen,
Who bring her loads of fish from every sea
And river. She has mariners who go
And brave the storms of distant seas."
Thus marvellously glorying in
His sunny mother-land, the pretty boy

Told of the blue sea varying rough and smooth,
Of Mount Majour that feeds the mills

With hampersful of olives soft,
 And of the bitterns booming in the marshes.
 But, O charming nut-brown city !
 He'd forgot to tell of your supreme
 Phenomenon. The child forgot to say

Your sky, O fertile land of Arles !
 Dispenses to your daughters beauty pure,
 As it does wings to birds, aroma
 To the hills, and grapes to autumn.
 Meanwhile, pensive, inattentive
 Stood the country maid. She said at last,
 " Bright boy, before the frog is heard to croak

" Upon the willows, I must be across
 The Rhone, and left there to the care of God."—
 " *Pecaire !* thou hast fallen on thy feet,"
 The little fellow answered ; " we are fishers,
 And to-night, dressed as thou art,
 Thou'l sleep with us beneath the tent,
 Pitched at the foot of the white poplars ;

" And at dawn to-morrow, father
 Over in the boat will put thee."—" No !
 I'm strong enough to wander on to-night."—
 " Forbear ! dost thou then care to see the band
 Escaping plaintive from the *li ! i ! i !*
Iran de la Capo ? If they meet thee, down
 Into the gulf they'll drag thee after them."

" *Iran de la Capo !* what is that ?"—
 " While walking o'er the stones,
 Young lady, I will tell thee," he began.
 " There was a treading-floor that groaned

Beneath its weight of sheaves. Thou'l see
The spot to-morrow by the river side.
For a whole month or more the piled-up sheaves

“A round of Carmargue horses trod
Unceasingly. Not e'en a moment's rest
Had they, their hoofs were aye at work ;
And on the dusty floor were heaped
Mountains of sheaves still to be trod. They say
The sun was so intensely hot
The treading floor glowed like a furnace.

“Wooden pitchforks pitched in unremittingly
More sheaves. The beardy ears
Were shot like cross-bow arrows
At the horses' muzzles.
On St. Charles', as on St. Peter's Day,
The Arles bell rang, and might ring—
Neither holiday was there nor Sunday

“For the harassed steeds. But aye
The weary tramping, aye the pricking goad,
And aye the husky shouting of the keeper
In the fiery gyrating turmoil.
Miserly as hard, the master
Of the white corn-treaders actually
Muzzled them. Our Lady's Day in August came ;

“Upon the heaped-up sheaves the beasts,
As usual coupled, were still treading,
Bathed in foam, their livers sticking
To their ribs, and muzzles slobbering ;
When lo ! a blast of cold wind blows in—
I ! a blast of the *Mistral*, and sweeps
The floor. The greedy eyes of the despisers

" Of God's day into their sockets sink.
 The treading-floor quakes horribly, and opens
 Like a huge black caldron. Whirls the piled heap
 Furiously—pitchforkers, keepers,
 Keepers' aids unable are to save it.
 Owner, treading-floor and van, van-goats
 And mill-stones, drivers, horses, all

" Are in the fathomless abyss engulfed!"
 " You make me shudder," says Mirèio.
 " Ah ! but that's not all ; and may be
 For a little fool thou takest me.
 But by the place thou'l see to-morrow,
 In the water playing, carp and tench,
 And hear marsh-blackbirds singing on the reeds.

" But when our Lady's Day comes,
 And the fire-crowned sun to the meridian
 Climbs, then lie down softly, and with ear to
 ground,
 And eye upon the water, thou shalt see
 The gulf, from limpid, darken with the shadow
 Of the sun ; and gradually thou'l hear
 A humming sound, as of a fly's wing,

" Rise up from the troubled deep,
 Then 'twill be like the tinkle of small bells ;
 And then thou'l hear among the weeds
 A tumult horrible, like voices
 In an amphora. 'Twill next be like
 A sound of weary trotting on a hard,
 Dry, sonorous surface ; horses trotting,

“Very lean, and that a swearing, shouting
Keeper brutally insults ;
But as the holy sun declines,
The blasphemous sounds arising from the gulf
Grow gradually faint,
The limping steeds are heard to cough,
The tinkle ceases of the little bells.

“Among the weeds,
And on the tops of the tall reeds
The blackbirds sing again.”
Thus chatting, walked the little man,
Basket in hand before Mirèio.
With the sky the mountain was now blending
Its blue ramparts and its yellow crests ;

And as the sun receded with its glory,
He the peace of God left to the marshes,
To the Grand Clar, to the olives
Of Vaulongo, to the Rhone extending
Away yonder, to the reapers who unbend
At length, and drink the sea-breeze.
“Now,” the little fellow cries, “young lady,

“Look ! there’s our pavilion canvas fluttering
In the wind. The poplar-tree that shelters it,
See ! brother Not is climbing. He’s cigalas
After, or may be he’s looking out for me.
Ah ! he has seen us. Sister Zeto, who
Was lending him her shoulder, has turned round ;
Away she runs off to advise our mother.

" She may set the *bouia baiiso** on at once.
Lo ! now there's mother stooping for the fresh fish
At the bottom of the boat." Then as the two
With equal haste were nearing the pavilion,
Cries the fisher, " Wife, our Androun soon
Will be the pink of fishers, for already,
See, he's bringing us the Queen of Eels !"

* Water-zoutchee.

A NORTH-POLÉ STORY.

Up where the world grows cold,
Under the sharp North star,
The wrinkled ice is very old,
And the life of man is far ;
None to see when the fog falls white,
And none to shiver and hear
How wild the bears are in the night,
Which lasts for half a year !

The wind may blow as it will,
But it cannot shake a tree,
Nor stir the waves which lie so still—
On the corpse of that dead sea !
The sun comes out over flowerless strands
Where only ice-tears flow,
When the North weeps for sweet woodlands,
Which she must never know.

Earth speaks with awful lips,
“ No place for man is here !
Between my bergs I'll crush your ships,
If you will come too near ;
You shall be slain by bitter wind,
Or starved on barren shore,
By cruel snow shall strike you blind ;
Go !—trouble me no more.”

But British men are fain
To venture on and through,
And when you tell them to refrain,
They set themselves to do ;
Into the secrets of the snow,
They hurry and they press,
And answer Nature's coldest " No "
With a great shout of " Yes."

It was a little band
Went on that dangerous track,
To do a message from our land,
And to bring an answer back ;
The frost had bound their good ship tight,
And years were come and gone,
When a few brave hearts, as best they might,
Went over the shores alone.

And as one strode so bold,
He saw a sight of fear,—
Nine white wolves came over the wold,
And they were watching a deer ;
By three, and by two, and by one,
A cunning half moon they made ;
They glanced at each other and did not run,
But crept like creatures afraid.

They knew what they were about,
And the poor thing knew it too,
It turned its head like a child in doubt,
And shrank, and backward drew ;
But whether it looked to left or right
It met a savage eye,
And the man stood still and saw the sight,
And felt that it must die.

Backward, trembling and fast,
And onward, crafty and slow,
And over the cliff's sheer edge at last,
And crash on the ice below ;
And then with a whirl and a plunge and a whoop,
The wolves are down the hill ;
They break their ranks, that wild white troop,
When it is time to kill.

And days and nights went past,
And the men grew weary and pale,
Scanty food and freezing blast,
And hearts beginning to fail !
The wanderer knew his steps were slow,
And his eyes were languid and dim,
When nine white wolves came over the snow,
And they were watching—him.

He saw them gather and glance,
And he remembered the deer !
He saw them frame their cunning advance,
And he felt a little fear !
But never a hair's breadth did he swerve,
Nor lower his looks a whit,
But he faced the cruel scimitar-curve,
And then—walked up to it !

There is never a beast so strong
As to bear a brave man's eye !
They crouched ; they looked as if nothing was
wrong,
And then they turned to fly.
The man stood still and drew his breath,
When he saw the scattering ranks ;
He had been face to face with death :
I hope he uttered thanks.

There's a fireside far away
A little anxious now,
Where a man shall sit one joyful day,
And tell of the world of snow ;
And tell of the wolves who sup so grim,
And leave no bone behind ;
And how they meant to sup on him,
But looked, and changed their mind.

M. B. SWEDLEY.

THE DEATH OF ROLAND.

De Karlemane et de Rolant,
Et d'Olivier, et des vassaus,
Qui moururent à Rainscevaux !

I.

DEAD was Gerard the fair, the woman-mouth'd, the gay,
Who jested with the foe he slung his sword to slay ;
Dead was the giant Guy, big-hearted, small of brain ;
Dead was the hunchback Sanche, his red haunch slit in twain ;
Dead was the old hawk Luz, and sleeping by his side
His twin-sons, Charles the Fleet, and Pierre the serpent-eyed ;
Dead was Antoine, the same who swore to speak no word
Till twice a hundred heads fell by his single sword ;
Dead was the wise Gerin, who gripp'd both spear and pen ;
Sansun was dead, Gereir was dead !—dead were the mighty men !

II.

Then Roland felt his life return, and stirr'd, and cried,
Felt down if Adalmar lay safe against his side,
And smilèd quietlie, for joy the sword was there,
With heavy mailèd hand push'd back his bloody hair,
And lying prone upon his back, beheld on high
The stars like leopard-spots strewn in the deep grey sky,
And turn'd his head, and saw the great hills looming dim,
And in the west the Moon with red and wasting rim,
Then sighing deep, swung round his head as in a swoon,
And met the hunchback's eyne, glazed beneath the Moon.
Chill was the air, and frosty vapours to and fro,
Like sheeted shapes, in dim moonshine, crawl'd to and fro ;
And Roland thought, because his wound had made him weak,
The cold shapes breathed alive their breath upon his cheek,
And crawling to his knees, shivering in the cold,
Loosen'd his helm, and dimly gleaming down it roll'd ;
And slowly his faint eyes distinguished things around,—
The dark and moveless shapes asleep upon the ground,
A helmet glittering dim, a sword-hilt twinkling red,
A white horse quivering beside a warrior dead,

And in one moonlit place a ring on a white hand,
When Roland thought, "Gerard ! the merriest of
the band !"
And no one stirr'd ; behind, the hills loomed cold
and dim ;
And in the west the waning Moon with red and
wasting rim.

III.

Then Roland cried aloud, "If living man there be
Among these heaps of slain, let that man answer
me !"
And no man spake. The wind crept chilly over
all,
But no man felt it breathe, or heard the leader call.
"Ho, Olivier ! Gerin ! speak, an' ye be not dead !"
Small voices of the hills afar off echoëd,—
Only a heathen churl rose cursing on his side,
And spat at him who spake, and curl'd his limbs,
and died.
Then Roland's mighty heart was heavy with its
woes,—
When suddenly, across the fields, faint radiance
rose,
First a faint spark, and then a gleam, and then a
glare,
Then smoke and crimson streaks that mingled in
the air,
And as the thick flame clear'd, and the black smoke
swam higher,
There loom'd beyond a shape like one girt round
with fire.
And Roland cried aloud, because his joy was great,

And brandish'd Adalmar, and fell beneath the weight,
 And lying prone strain'd eyes, and, gazing through the night,
 Still saw the glittering shape girt round with smoky light,
 And seemèd in a dream, and could not think at all,
 Until his heart rose up, and he had strength to crawl,
 Then like a bruised worm weary he crept and slow,
 Straining his fever'd eyes lest the sweet light should go,
 And often pause to breathe, feeling his pulses fail,
 'Mong heathens foul to smell and warriors clad in mail,
 But coming near the light beheld the godly man,
 Turpin the archbishop, unhelmed and gaunt and wan,—
 Gripping with skinny hand the ivory Cross sat he,
 Clad head to heel in bright white mail and propp'd against a tree.

IV.

And when on hands and knees the stricken chief came near,
 The Bishop raised the Cross, and knew his comrade dear ;
 And Roland did not speak, though tears were in his ee,
 But touch'd the blessed Cross, and smilèd painfullie ;
 While, "Glory be to God!" the Bishop faintly said,

“ Thou livest, kinsman dear, though all the rest be dead !
For while I linger’d here and listened for a sound,
And in the dim red moon beheld the dead around,
Thinking I heard a cry, I sought to cry again,
But all my force had fled, and I was spent with pain ;
When, peering round, I saw this heathen at my heel,
And search’d his leathern scrip and found me flint and steel,
Then crawl’d, though swooning sick, and found his charger grey,
And searching in the bags found wither’d grass and hay,
And made a fire, a sign for thee, whoe’er thou wert,
And fainted when it blazed, for I am sorely hurt ;
And waken’d to behold thee near, wounded and weak,
The red fire flaming on thy face, thy breath upon my cheek.”

v.

Then those brave chiefs wrung hands, and as the smoky flare
Died out, and all was dark, the Bishop said a prayer,
And shadows loom’d out black against the frosty shine,
While Turpin search’d his pouch and murmur’d
“ Here is wine ! ”
And Roland on his elbows raised himself and quaff’d,

Drank, till his head swam round, a deep and
goodly draught,
And quickly he felt strong, his heart was wild and
light,
And placed his dear sword softly down, and rose
his height,
Loosening his mail, drew forth the shirt that lay
beneath,
And took the blood-stain'd silk and tore it with his
teeth,
And dress'd the Bishop's wounds with chilly hand
and slow,
Then, while the Bishop pray'd, bound up his own
wide wound alsoe.

VI.

Then Roland search'd around, dipping his hands
in blood,
Till in a henchman's pack he found a torch of
wood,
And taking flint and steel, blew with his mouth, and
lo !
The torch blazed bright, and all grew crimson in
the glow ;
And gave the torch unto the man of holy fame,
Who glittering like fire, sat sickening in the flame,
And crept across the mead, into the dark again,
And felt the faces of the slain, seeking the mighty
men.

VII.

Bless'd be thy name, white Mary, for thy breath
and light,
Like vapour cold, did fill the nostrils of thy knight!

Yea, all his force came back, his red wound ceased
to bleed ;
And he had hands of strength to do a blessed deed !
For one by-one he found each well-belovèd head,
Sought out the mighty chiefs, among the heaps of
dead,
Softly unloosed their helms, let the long tresses flow,
Trail'd them to Turpin's feet and set them in a row ;
And underneath the tree the pine-torch blazèd
bright,
On dreadful shapes in mail and faces ghastly white :
Sansun, who held his sword with grip that ne'er
unloos'd ;
Gerin, with chin on breast, as if he breathed and
mused ;
Great Guy, with twisted limbs, and bosom gash'd
and bare,
And blood-clots on his arms the cold had frozen
there ;
Old Luz, his skinny hands filled with a foeman's
beard ;
Charles with his feet lopp'd off, Pierre with his
green eye speared ;
Sanche, the fierce woman's foe, and round his neck,
behold !
A lock of lady's hair set in a ring of gold ;
Antoine, with crafty smile, as if new fights he
plann'd ;
Gerard, still smiling on the ring upon his hand ;
And, brightest of the band, our Roland's comrade
dear,
The iron woman-shape, the long-lock'd Olivier,
Who gript the bladeless hilt of Durandel his pride,
And held it to his kissing lips, as when he swooned
and died.

VIII.

And Turpin raised the torch, counted them one by one :

“ Ah, woe is me, sweet knights, for now your work is done ! ”

Then, reaching with the Cross, he touched their brows and cried :

“ White Mary take your souls, and place them at her side !

White Mary take your souls, and guard them tenderlie,—

For ye were goodly men as any men that be ! ”

And Roland stooping touch'd the brow of Olivier,
Smoothing the silken hair behind the small white ear,

And cried, “ Ah, woe is me, that we should ever part ! ”

And kiss'd him on the foamy lips, and swooned for ache of heart.

IX.

And Turpin dropp'd the torch, that flam'd upon the ground,

But meeting new-shed blood, went out with hissing sound ;

He groped for Roland's heart, and felt it faintly beat,

And, groping on the earth, he found the wine-flask sweet,

And fainting with the toil, slaked not his own great drouth,

But, shivering, held the flask to Roland's foamy mouth :

E'en then, his Soul shot up, and in its shirt of
steel
The corse sank back with crash like ice that cracks
beneath the heel.

X.

The frosty night-wind waken'd Roland from his
swound,
And, spitting salt foam from his tongue, he look'd
around,
And saw the Bishop dear lying at length close
by,—
Touch'd him, and found him cold, and utter'd up
a cry:
“Now, dead and cold, alas! lieth the noblest
wight
For preaching sermons sweet and wielding sword
in fight;
His voice was as a trump that on a mountain
blows,
He scatter'd oils of grace and wasted heathen-
foes,—
White Mary take his soul, to join our comrades
dear,
And let him wear his bishop's crown in heaven
above as here!”

XI.

Then it grew chiller far, the grass grew moist with
dew,
The landskip glimmer'd pale, the hoary breezes
blew,

The many stars above melted like snow-flake white,
And far behind the hills the east was laced with light,
The dismal vale loom'd clear against a crimson glow,
Clouds spread above like wool, pale steam arose below,
And on the faces dead the frosty morning came,
On mighty men, and foes, and squires unknown to fame,
And arm'd mail gleam'd bright, and broken stee gleam'd grey,
And cold dew fill'd the wounds of those who sleeping lay;
And Roland, rising, drank the dawn with lips apart,
But scents were in the air that sicken'd his proud heart!
Yea, all was deathly still; and now, though it was day,
The moon grew small and pale, but did not pass away,
The white mist wreath'd and curl'd over the glittering dead,
A cock crew, far among the hills, and echoe answer'd.

XII.

Then peering to the east, across the dewy steam,
He spied a naked wood, and there a running stream;

Thirsting full sore, he rose, and thither did he hie,
Faintly, and panting hard, because his end was
nigh ;
But first he stooping loosed from Turpin's fingers
cold
The Cross inlaid with gems and wrought about
with gold,
And bare the holy Cross aloft in one weak hand,
And with the other trail'd great Adalmar his
brand.
Thus wearily he came into the woody place,
And stooping to the stream dipped therein his
face,
And in the pleasant cold let swim his great black
curls,
Then swung his forehead up, glittering as with
pearls ;
And while the black blood spouted in a burning
jet,
He loosed the bandage of his wound and made it
wet,
Wringing the silken bands, making them free from
gore,
Then placed them cool upon the wound, and
tighten'd them once more.

XIII.

Eastward rose cloudy mist, drifting like smoke
in wind,
Ghastly and round the sun loom'd dismally be-
hind,
High overhead the moon faded with sickle chill,
The frosty wind drop'd down, and all was death-
lier still,

And Roland, drawing deep the breath of vapours cold,
 Beheld three marble steps, as of a ruin old,
 And at the great tree-bolls lay many a carven stone,
 Thereto a dial quaint, where slimy grass had grown ;
 And frosted were the boughs that gatherèd around,
 And cold the runlet crept, with soft and soothing sound,
 And Roland smilèd sweet, and thought, “ Since death is nigh,
 In sooth, I know no gentler place where gentle man could die !”

XIV.

Whereon the warrior heard a sound of breaking boughs,
 And, from the thicket wild, leapt one with tannèd brows ;
 Half-naked, glistening dark with oily limbs, he came,
 His long-nail'd fingers curl'd, his little eyes aflame,
 Shrieking in his own tongue, as on the chief he flew,
 “ Yield thee thy sword of fame, and thine own flesh thereto ! ”
 Then Roland gazed and frown'd, though nigh unto his death,
 Sat still, and drew up all his strength in a great breath,

Pray'd quickly to the saints he served in former days,
With right hand clutch'd the sword he was too weak to raise,
And in the left swung up the Cross, and, shrieking hoarse,
Between the eyebrows smote the foe with all his force,
Yea, smote him to the brain, crashing through skin and bone,
And prone the heathen fell, as heavy as a stone,
And gold and gems of price were loosen'd by the blow,
And, as he fell, rain'd round the wild hair of the foe ;
But Roland kissed the Cross, and, laughing, backward fell,
And on the hollow air the laugh rang heavy, like a knell

xv.

And Roland thought : " I surely die ; but, ere I end,
Let me be sure that thou art ended too, my friend !
For should a heathen hand grasp thee when I am clay,
My ghost would grieve full sore until the judgment day ! "
Then to the marble steps, under the tall bare trees,
Trailing the mighty sword, he crawl'd on hands and knees,

And on the slimy stone he struck the blade with
might—
The bright hilt, sounding, shook, the blade flash'd
sparks of light ;
Wildly again he struck, and his sick head went
round,
Again there sparkled fire, again rang hollow
sound ;
Ten times he struck, and threw strange echoes
down the glade,
Yet still unbroken, sparkling fire, glitter'd the
peerless blade.

xvi.

Then Roland wept, and set his face against the
stone—
“ Ah, woe, I shall not rest, though cold be flesh
and bone ! ”
And pain was on his soul to die so cheerless
death ;
When on his naked neck he felt a touch like
breath,
And did not stir, but thought, “ O God, that
madest me,
And shall my sword of fame brandish'd by
heathens be ?
And shall I die accursed, beneath a heathen's
heel,
Too weak to slay the slave whose hated breath I
feel ? ”
Then, clenching teeth, he turn'd to look upon the
foe,
His bright eyes growing dim with coming death ;
and lo !

His life shot up in fire, his heart arose again,
For no unhallow'd face loom'd dark upon his ken,
No heathen-breath he felt,—though he beheld,
indeed,
The white arch'd head and round brown eyes of
Veillintif, his steed !

XVII.

And pressing his moist cheek on his who gazed
beneath,
Curling the upper lip to show the large white
teeth,
The white horse, quivering, look'd with melan-
choly eye,
Then waved his streaming mane, and uttered up a
cry ;
And Roland's bitterness was spent—he laugh'd, he
smiled,
He clasp'd his darling's neck, wept like a little
child ;
He kiss'd the foamy lips, and hugged his friend,
and cried :
“ Ah, nevermore, and nevermore, shall we to
battle ride !
Ah, nevermore, and nevermore, shall we sweet
comrades be !
And Veillintif, had I the heart to die forgetting
thee ?
To leave thy mighty heart to break, in slavery to
the foe ?
I had not rested in the grave, if it had ended so.
Ah, never shall we conquering ride, with banners
bright unfurl'd,
A shining light 'mong lesser lights, a wonder to
the world ! ”

XVIII.

And Veillintif neigh'd low, breathing on him who died,
Wild rock'd his great strong heart beneath his silken hide,
Tears roll'd from his brown eyes upon his master's cheek,
And Roland, gathering strength, though wholly worn and weak,
Held up the point of Adalmar the peerless brand,
And at his comrade's heart push'd with his dying hand ;
And the black blood sprang forth, while heavily as lead,
With quivering, silken side, the mighty steed fell dead ;
And Roland, for his eyes with frosty film were dim,
Groped for the steed, crept close, and smiled, embracing him,
And, pillow'd on his neck, kissing the pure white hair,
Clasp'd Adalmar the brand, and tried to say a prayer,
And that he conquering died, wishing all men to know,
Set firm his lips, and turn'd his face towards the foe,
And clos'd eyes, and slept, and never woke again.
Roland is dead, the gentle knight ! dead is the crown of men !

R. BUCHANAN.

KING ROBERT OF SICILY.

ERT of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
arelled in magnificent attire,
in retinue of many a knight and squire,
St. John's Eve, at vespers, proudly sat
I heard the priests chant the Magnificat.
as he listened, o'er and o'er again
eated, like a burthen or refrain,
caught the words, "*Depositum potentes
sede, et exaltavit humiles;*"
I slowly lifting up his kingly head,
to a learned clerk beside him said,
hat mean these words?" The clerk made
answer meet,
e has put down the mighty from their seat,
I has exalted them of low degree."
reat King Robert muttered scornfully,
is well that such seditious words are sung
y by priests and in the Latin tongue ;
unto priests and people be it known,
re is no power can push me from my throne!"
I leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,
led by the chant monotonous and deep.

en he awoke, it was already night ;
church was empty, and there was no light,

Save where the lamps, that glimmered few and faint,
 Lighted a little space before some saint.
 He started from his seat and gazed around,
 But saw no living thing and heard no sound.
 He groped towards the door, but it was locked ;
 He cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked,
 And uttered awful threatenings and complaints,
 And imprecations upon men and saints.
 The sounds re-echoed from the roof and walls
 As if dead priests were laughing in their stalls !

At length the sexton, hearing from without
 The tumult of the knocking and the shout,
 And thinking thieves were in the house of prayer,
 Came with his lantern, asking, " Who is there ?"
 Half-choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,
 " Open : 'tis I, the King ! Art thou afraid ?"
 The frightened sexton, muttering, with a curse,
 " This is some drunken vagabond, or worse !"
 Turned the great key, and flung the portal wide ;
 A man rushed by him at a single stride,
 Haggard, half-naked, without hat or cloak,
 Who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke,
 But leaped into the darkness of the night,
 And vanished like a spectre from his sight.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
 And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
 Despoiled of his magnificent attire,
 Bare-headed, breathless, and besprent with mire,
 With sense of wrong and outrage desperate,
 Strode on and thundered at the palace gate ;
 Rushed through the court-yard, thrusting in his
 rage
 To right and left each seneschal and page,

And hurried up the broad and sounding stair,
His white face ghastly in the torches' glare.
From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed ;
Voices and cries he heard, but did not heed,
Until at last he reached the banquet-room,
Blazing with light, and breathing with perfume.
There on the dais sat another king,
Wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring,
King Robert's self in features, form, and height,
But all transfigured with angelic light !
It was an Angel ; and his presence there
With a divine effulgence filled the air,
An exaltation, piercing the disguise,
Though none the hidden Angel recognise.

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,
The thronelss monarch on the Angel gazed,
Who met his looks of anger and surprise
With the divine compassion of his eyes ;
Then said, "Who art thou ? And why com'st thou
here ?"
To which King Robert answered, with a sneer,
" I am the king, and come to claim my own
From an impostor, who usurps my throne ! "
And suddenly, at these audacious words,
Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords ;
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,
" Nay, not the king, but the king's jester ; thou
Henceforth shall wear the bells and scalloped cape,
And for thy counsellor shalt lead an ape ;
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call,
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall ! "

Deaf to King Robert's threats, and cries, and prayers,
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs ;

A group of tittering pages tan before,
And as they opened wide the folding door,
His heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms,
The boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms,
And all the vaulted chamber roar and ring
With the mock plaudits of "Long live the King!"

Next morning, waking with the day's first beam,
He said within himself, "It was a dream!"
But the straw rustled as he turned his head,
There were the cap and bells beside his bed,
Around him rose the bare, discoloured walls,
Close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls,
And in the corner, a revolting shape,
Shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape.
It was no dream; the world he loved so much,
Had turned to dust and ashes at his touch!

Days came and went; and now returned again
To Sicily the old Saturnian reign;
Under the Angel's governance benign
The happy island danced with corn and wine,
And deep within the mountain's burning breast
Enceladus, the giant, was at rest.
Meanwhile King Robert yielded to his fate,
Sullen and silent and disconsolate.
Dressed in the motley garb that jesters wear,
With looks bewildered and a vacant stare,
Close shaven above the ears, as monks are shorn,
By courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn,
His only friend the ape, his only food
What others left,—he still was unsubdued.
And when the Angel met him on his way,
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say,

Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,
“Art thou the king?” the passion of his woe
Burst from him in resistless overflow,
And, lifting high his forehead, he would fling
The haughty answer back, “I am, I am the king!”

Almost three years were ended ; when there came
Ambassadors of great repute and name
From Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Unto King Robert, saying that Pope Urbane
By letter summoned them forthwith to come
On Holy Thursday to his city of Rome.
The Angel with great joy received his guests,
And gave them presents of embroidered vests,
And velvet mantles with rich ermine lined,
And rings and jewels of the rarest kind.
Then he departed with them o'er the sea
Into the lovely land of Italy,
Whose loveliness was more resplendent made
By the mere passing of that cavalcade,
With plumes, and cloaks, and housings, and the
stir
Of jewelled bridle and of golden spur.

And lo ! among the menials, in mock state,
Upon a piebald steed, with shambling gait,
His cloak of fox-tails flapping in the wind,
The solemn ape demurely perched behind,
King Robert rode, making huge merriment
In all the country towns through which they went.

The Pope received them with great pomp, and blare
Of bannered trumpets, in St. Peter's Square,

Giving his benediction and embrace,
Fervent, and full of Apostolic grace.
While with congratulations and with prayers
He entertained the Angel unawares,
Robert, the Jester, bursting through the crowd,
Into their presence rushed, and cried aloud,
“ I am the King ! Look, and behold in me
Robert, your brother, King of Sicily !
This man, who wears my semblance to your eyes,
Is an impostor in a king’s disguise.
Do you not know me ? Does no voice within
Answer my cry, and say we are akin ? ”
The Pope in silence, but with troubled mien
Gazed at the Angel’s countenance serene ;
The Emperor, laughing, said, “ It is strange sport
To keep a madman for thy Fool at Court ! ”
And the poor, baffled Jester in disgrace
Was hustled back among the populace.

In solemn state the Holy Week went by,
And Easter Sunday gleamed upon the sky ;
The presence of the Angel, with its light,
Before the sun rose, made the City bright,
And with new fervour filled the hearts of men,
Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.
Even the Jester, on his bed of straw,
With haggard eyes the unwonted splendour saw,
He felt within a power unfelt before,
And, kneeling humbly on his chamber-floor,
He heard the rushing garments of the Lord
Sweep through the silent air, ascending heavenward.

And now the visit ending, and once more
Valmond returning to the Danube’s shore,

Homeward the Angel journeyed, and again
The land was made resplendent with his train,
Flashing along the towns of Italy
Unto Salerno, and from there by sea.
And when once more within Palermo's wall,
And, seated on the throne in his great hall,
He heard the Angelus from convent towers,
As if the better world conversed with ours,
He beckoned to King Robert to draw nigher,
And with a gesture bade the rest retire ;
And when they were alone, the Angel said,
“Art thou the King?” Then bowing down his
head,
King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast,
And meekly answered him : “Thou knowest
best!
My sins as scarlet are ; let me go hence,
And in some cloister’s school of penitence,
Across those stones that pave the way to heaven,
Walk barefoot, till my guilty soul is shriven !”
The Angel smiled, and from his radiant face
A holy light illumined all the place,
And through the open window, loud and clear,
They heard the monks chant in the chapel near,
Above the stir and tumult of the street :
“He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree !”
And through the chant a second melody
Rose like the throbbing of a single string :
“I am an Angel, and thou art the King !”

King Robert, who was standing near the throne,
Lifted his eyes, and lo ! he was alone !
But all apparelled as in days of old,
With ermine mantle and with cloth of gold ;

And when his courtiers came, they found him
there
Kneeling upon the floor, absorbed in silent
prayer.

LONGFELLOW.

Tales of a Wayside Inn.

“WHAT IS GOOD FOR A BOOTLESS BENE?”

WHAT is good for a bootless bene?”

With these dark words begins my tale;
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
When prayer is of no avail?

“*What is good for a bootless bene?*”

The falconer to the lady said;
And she made answer, “Endless sorrow!”
For she knew that her son was dead.

She knew it by the falconer’s words,
And from the look of the falconer’s eye,
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride !
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

This striding place is called *The Strid*,
A name which it took of yore :
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come ;
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across *The Strid* ?

He sprang in glee—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were
steep ?
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And deep, unspeaking sorrow.
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

Long in darkness the mother sat,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately priory."

The stately priory was reared ;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at Even-song.

And the lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief !
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our friend !

WORDSWORTH.

THE PALMER'S TALE.

FAR in the purple time, e'er pain
Had yet commenced her ancient reign—
That time which never comes again—

I met a Palmer on the way,
“Oh, wretched youth ! in evil day
I find thee,” cried that pilgrim grey.

“ Thy love is dead : upon her lie
The snowy cerements, round her cry
The weeping crowd : I saw her die.

“ A thousand knights without compare,
A thousand maidens call her fair,
A thousand lilies deck her hair.

“ Her golden hair with halo crown'd.”
I heard—and fell upon the ground,
And saw no sight, and heard no sound.

Then, where she lay, I came and cried,
“ Oh ! dearest dear, here let me bide—
Here sleep for ever by thy side.”

A voice came from the little hill
Of earth, " O love, be constant still ;
Such is the pleasure of my will.

" Go, gather glory in the right.
A soul that dwells in love and light
Shall watch thee in the darkest night.

" And, like a bird upon her nest,
Shall brood above thee in thy rest,
And at the last shall make thee blest."

M.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO KERLAAR.

SHE stood beside the lattice ; her boy lay on his bed.

“Rouse, rouse thee now to look at the folk going by,” she said.

“Oh, I am sick, my mother ! I cannot see or hear ; I think of my dead Gretchen ; my grief is hard to bear.”

“Up ! Twist thy crown of roses ; for Kerlaar let us start ;
And take thy book. Christ’s mother will mend thy broken heart.”

The choirmen all are chanting ; the painted banners shine,
For now the pilgrims enter Cologne upon the Rhine.

The mother joined the hindmost, and led her son so pale,
And chaunted in the chorus, “O blessed Mary, hail !”
The mother of Christ at Kerlaar is robed and crowned to-day :
To-day she must succour many, for many are come to pray.

The sick and wounded praying where gentle Mary stands,
Bring waxen image-offerings, and waxen feet and hands.
Whoever a hand doth offer is forthwith whole of hand,
Whoever a foot doth offer no longer lame doth stand.

Many come hither on crutches who since, the dance hath led ;
Many can play the viol whose fingers before were dead.
The mother took a taper and moulded a waxen heart :
“Take that to Mary the Virgin, thy woe shall all depart.”

He takes the image sighing ; he sighs as his gift he brings ;
Tears from his eyes are springing ; from his heart his petition springs :
“O Mary ! highly favoured, who ever with God doth dwell ;
O Mary ! Queen of Heaven ! to thee my grief I tell.

“I live with my dear mother in the city of Cologne,
Where the bells of a hundred churches chime with a heavenward tone.
And near to us lived Gretchen ; but death hath torn her away.
A waxen heart I offer—O mend my heart, I pray !

“ Mend my heart, and early and late I will not fail
To pray at thine altar, chaunting, ‘ O Holy Mary,
hail ! ’ ”

While the sick boy and his mother in their little
chamber slept,
The mother of Christ came softly, and through the
darkness stept.

Bending over the sleeper, her tender hand she laid
Where his broken heart was beating, and smiled,
but nothing said.

The mother saw in a vision the Virgin come and go,
And then she woke from her dream, and the dogs
were barking below.

Cold and stiff on his pillow, her boy was lying dead,
And the red, red light of morning flickered about
his head.

She folded her hands as the sunlight coloured his
cheek so pale,
And she murmured, lowly chaunting, “ O blessed
Mary, hail ! ”

B. J.

A BALLAD.

O, **WERE** you at war in the red Eastern land?

What did you hear, and what did you see?

Saw you my son, with his sword in his hand?

Sent he, by you, any dear word to me?

"I come from red war, in that dire Eastern land:

Three deeds saw I done one might well die to see;

But I know not your son, with his sword in his hand;

If you would hear of him, paint him to me."

O, he is as gentle as south winds in May!

"Tis not a gentle place where I have been."

O, he has a smile like the outbreak of day!

"Where men are dying fast, smiles are not seen."

Tell me the mightiest deeds that were done.

Deeds of chief honour, you said, you saw three;

You said you saw three—I am sure he did one.

My heart shall discern him, and cry, "This is he!"

"I saw a man scaling a tower of despair,

And he went up alone, and the hosts shouted
loud."

That was my son! Had he streams of fair hair?

"Nay; it was black as the blackest night-cloud."

Did he live? "No, he died : but the fortress was won.

And they said it was grand for a man to die so."
Alas, for his mother! he was not my son.

Was there no fair-hair'd soldier who humbled the foe?

"I saw a man charging in front of his rank,
Thirty yards on, in a hurry to die ;
Straight as an arrow hurl'd into the flank
Of a huge desert beast, ere the hunter draws nigh."

Did he live? "No, he died ; but the battle was won,
And the conquest cry carried his name through the air.

Be comforted, mother ; he was not thy son—
Low was his forehead, and grey was his hair."

O, the brow of my son is as smooth as a rose ;
I kissed it last night in my dream. I have heard
Two legends of fame from the land of our foes ;
But you said there were three : you must tell me
the third.

"I saw a man flash from the trenches, and fly
In a battery's face ; but it was not to slay—
A poor little drummer had dropped down to die,
With his ankle shot through, in the place where
he lay.

"He carried the boy like a babe through the rain,
The death-pouring torrent, of grape-shot and shell;
And he walked at a foot's pace because of the pain;
Laid his burden down gently, smiled once, and
then fell."

Did he live? "No, he died: but he rescued the boy.

Such a death is more noble than life (so they said).

He had streams of fair hair, and a face full of joy;
And his name—" Speak it not! 'Tis my son!
He is dead!

O, dig him a grave by the red rowan-tree,
Where the spring moss grows softer than fringes
of foam;
And lay his bed smoothly, and leave room for me,
For I shall be ready before he comes home.

And carve on his tombstone a name and a wreath,
And a tale to touch hearts through the slow-spreading years—

How he died his noble and beautiful death,
And his mother, who longed for him, died of her tears.

But what is this face shining in at the door,
With its old smile of peace, and its flood of fair hair?

Are you come, blessed ghost, from the far heavenly shore?

Do not go back alone!—let me follow you there!

"O, clasp me, dear mother. I come to remain;
I come to your heart—God has answered your prayer.

Your son is alive from the host of the slain,
And the Cross of our Queen on his breast glitters fair!"

M. B. SMEDLEY.

THE VICAR.

SOME years ago, ere Time and Taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket
Was always shown across the Green,
And guided to the parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath ;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray
Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seemed to say,
“Our master knows you, you're expected.”

Up rose the Reverend Doctor Brown,
Up rose the Doctor's “ winsome marrow; ”
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow.

Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If when he reached his journey's end,
And warmed himself in court or college,
He had not gained an honest friend,
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge—
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love, on liquor,
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the vicarage or the vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses ;
It slipped from politics to puns,
It passed from Mahomet to Moses.
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror ;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished truth or started error,
The Baptist found him far too deep,
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow,
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said nor show'd,
 That earth is foul, that heaven is gracious,
 Without refreshment on the road
 From Jerome or from Athanasius ;
 And sure a righteous zeal inspired
 The head and heart that penn'd and plann'd
 them,
 For all who understood admired,
 And some who did not understand them.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
 In the low hut or garnished cottage,
 And praise the farmer's homely wit,
 And share the widow's homelier pottage ;
 At his approach complaint grew mild,
 And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
 The clammy lips of fever smiled
 The welcome, which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
 Of Julius Cæsar, or of Venus ;
 From him I learned the rule of three,
 Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and Quæ genus.
 I used to singe his powdered wig,
 To steal the staff he put such trust in ;
 And make the puppy dance a jig
 When he began to quote Augustin.

Alack the change ! in vain I look
 For haunts in which my boyhood trifled—
 The level lawn, the trickling brook,
 The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled.

The church is larger than before ;
You reach it by a carriage entry ;
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat ; you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose style is very Ciceronian,
Where is the old man laid ? Look down,
And construe on the slab before you,
“ Hic jacet GULIELMUS BROWN,
Vir nulla non donandus lauro.”

PRAED.



SECTION IV.

**POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND
FANCY.**



A SAD SONG.

WEEP no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone ;
Violets plucked, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again ;
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully ;
Fate's hidden ends eyes cannot see :
Joys as wingèd dreams fly past,
Why should sadness longer last ?
Grief is but a wound to woe ;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no mo'.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

TIMES GO BY TURNS.

THE loppèd tree in time may grow again ;
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower ;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower ;
Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb ;
Her tides have equal times to come and go ;
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web ;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring,
No endless night, yet not eternal day ;
The saddest birds a season find to sing ;
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay ;
Thus with succeeding turns, God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost,
That net that holds no great, takes little fish :
In some things all, in all things none are crossed ;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish ;
Unmeddled joys here to no man befall,
Who least hath some, who most hath never all.

R. SOUTHWELL. B. 1560.

S O N G.

Ask me no more, where June bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose ;
For in your beauties, orient deep,
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more, whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day ;
For, in pure love, heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more, whither doth haste
The nightingale, when May is past ;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more, where those stars light,
That downwards fall in dead of night—
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become, as in their sphere.

Ask me no more, if east or west,
The phœnix builds her spicy nest ;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

T. CAREW. B. 1589.

BEYOND THE VEIL.

THEY are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here ;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days ;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope, and high Humility,
High as the heavens above !
These are your walks, and you have showed them
me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death, the jewel of the just,
Shining nowhere but in the dark ;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may
know,
At first sight, if the bird be flown ;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted
themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there ;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee,
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass ;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

HENRY VAUGHAN. B. 1621.

THE RETREAT.

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy !
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white celestial thought ;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face ;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity ;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a single sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
Oh ! how I long to travel back
And tread again that ancient track,
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train ;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm-trees.

But ah ! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move ;
And when this dust falls to the urn
In that state I came, return.

H. VAUGHAN. B. 1621.

PEACE.

My soul, there is a country,
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry,
All skilful in the wars.
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And one born in a manger,
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend,
And (O my soul, awake !)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure,
But One who never changes,
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

H. VAUGHAN, B. 1621.

WAE'S ME FOR PRINCE CHARLIE.

A **WEE** bird came to our ha' door,
He warbled sweet and clearly ;
And aye the o'ercome o' his sang,
Was " Wae's me for Prince Charlie ! "
Oh, when I heard the bonny, bonny bird,
The tears came drapping rarely,
I took my bonnet aff my head,
For weel I lo'ed Prince Charlie.

Quoth I, " My bird, my bonnie, bonnie bird,
Is that a tale ye borrow ?
Or is't some words ye've learned by rote,
Or a lilt o' dool and sorrow ? "
" Oh no, no, no," the wee bird sang,
" I've flown sin' morning early ;
But sic a day o' wind and rain—
Ah ! wae's me for Prince Charlie.

" O'er hills that are by right his ain,
He roams a lonely stranger ;
On ilka hand he's pressed by want,
On ilka side by danger.
Yestreen I met him in the glen,
My heart near bursted fairly ;
For sadly changed, indeed, was he—
Oh ! wae's me for Prince Charlie !

"Dark night came on ; the tempest howled
Out owre the hills and valleys ;
And where was't that your Prince lay down,
Whase hame should be a palace ?
He rowed him in a Highland plaid,
Which covered him but sparely,
And slept beneath a bush o' broom,—
Oh ! wae's me for Prince Charlie."

But now the bird saw some red coats,
And he shook his wings wi' anger ;
" Oh, this is no a land for me,
I'll tarry here nae langer ! "
A while he hovered on the wing,
Ere he departed fairly ;
But weel I mind the farewell strain,—
'Twas " Wae's me for Prince Charlie ! "

WILLIAM GLEN.

D I R G E.

If thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart—
 Then sleep, dear, sleep !
And not a sorrow
Hangs any tear on your eyelashes ;
 Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow
 In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love, and all its smart—
 Then die, dear, die !
'Tis deeper, sweeter
Than on a rose-bank, to lie dreaming
 With folded eye.
And then alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou'l meet her
 In eastern sky.

T. L. BEDDOES.

THERE STOOD A LONELY FIR-TREE.

THERE stood a lonely fir-tree
Far up on a northern height ;
He sleeps, and round him frost and snow
Weave ever a coverlet white.

He is dreaming of a palm-tree
In the sunny morning land ;
Alone, and sad, and silent
Mid rocks and burning sand

HEINE.

A REVERIE.

CALM is the night, and the city is sleeping.—

Once in this house dwelt a lady fair ;
Long, long ago she left it, weeping ;
But still the old house is standing there.

Yonder a man at the heavens is staring,
Wringing his hands as in sorrowful case ;
He turns to the moonlight, his countenance baring—
Oh, heavens ! he shows me my own sad face !

Shadowy form, with my own agreeing,
Why mockest thou thus, in the moonlight cold,
The sorrows which here once vex'd my being,
Many a night in the days of old ?

HEINRICH HEINE.

THE FUGITIVES.

THE waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing—

Away !

The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—

Come away !

The earth is like ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion ;
Bird, beast, man, and worm
Have crept out of the storm—

Come away !

“ Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale ;—
A bold pilot, I trow,
Who should follow us now,”

Shouted he.

And she cried :—“ Ply the oar,
Put off gaily from shore !”
As she spoke bolts of death
Mixed with hail specked their path
O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower, and rock,
The blue beacon-cloud broke,
Though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flashed fast
From the lee.

“ And fear’st thou, and fear’st thou ?
And see’st thou, and hear’st thou ?
And drive we not free
O’er the terrible sea,
I and thou ? ”
One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover ;
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure,
Soft and low.
While around the lashed ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered, and shifted,
To and fro.

In the court of the fortress,
Beside the pale portress,
Like a bloodhound well beaten
The bridegroom stands eaten
By shame :
On the topmost watch-turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the grey tyrant-father ;
To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame.

Living Voices.

And with curses as wild
As e'er clung to child,
He devotes to the blast
The best, the loveliest, and last
Of his name !

P. B. SHELLEY.

ABOU BEN ADHEM.

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase !)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold :—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
“ What writest thou ? ”—The Vision raised its head
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answer'd, “ The names of those who love the
Lord.”
“ And is mine one ? ” said Abou. “ Nay, not so,”
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still ; and said, “ I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.”
The Angel wrote and vanish'd. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had
bless'd,
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

LEIGH HUNT.

THE CASTLE BY THE SEA.

“ HAST thou seen that lordly castle,
That castle by the sea?
Golden and red above it
The clouds float gorgeously.

“ And fain it would stoop downward
To the mirror’d wave below;
And fain it would soar upward
In the evening’s crimson glow.”

“ Well have I seen that castle,
That castle by the sea,
And the moon above it standing,
And the mist rise solemnly.”

“ The winds and the waves of ocean,
Had they a merry chime?
Didst thou hear from those lofty chambers
The harp and the minstrel’s rhyme?”

“ The winds and the waves of ocean
They rested quietly,
But I heard on the gate a sound of wail,
And tears came to mine eye.”

“ And sawest thou on the turrets
The King and the royal bride ?
And the wave of their crimson mantles,
And the golden crown of pride ?

“ Led they not forth in rapture,
A beauteous maiden there ;
Resplendent as the morning sun,
Beaming with golden hair ? ”

“ Well saw I the ancient parents,
Without the crown of pride ;
They were moving slow in weeds of woe,
No maiden was by their side.”

UHLAND.

MY HEART AND I.

ENOUGH ! we're tired, my heart and I.
We sit beside the headstone thus,
And wish that name were carved for us.
The moss reprints more tenderly
The hard types of the mason's knife,
As Heaven's sweet life renews earth's life
With which we're tired, my heart and I.

You see we're tired, my heart and I.
We dealt with books, we trusted men,
And in our own blood drenched the pen,
As if such colours could not fly.
We walked too straight for fortune's end,
We loved too true to keep a friend :
At last we're tired, my heart and I.

How tired we feel, my heart and I !
We seem of no use in the world ;
Our fancies hang grey and uncurled
About men's eyes indifferently ;
Our voice which thrilled you so, will let
You sleep ; our tears are only wet :
What do we here, my heart and I ?

So tired, so tired, my heart and I !
It was not thus in that old time
When Ralph sat with me 'neath the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
“ Dear love, you're looking tired,” he said ;
I, smiling at him, shook my head :
'Tis now we're tired, my heart and I.

So tired, so tired, my heart and I,
Though now none takes me on his arm
To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath end in a sigh
Of happy languor. Now, alone,
We lean upon this graveyard stone,
Uncheered, unkissed, my heart and I.

Tired out we are, my heart and I.
Suppose the world brought diadems
To tempt us, crusted with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures ? Let it try.
We scarcely care to look at even
A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I.

Yet who complains ? My heart and I ?
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out ;
Disdain them, break them, throw them by !
And if before the days grew rough
We *once* were loved, used,—well enough,
I think, we've fared, my heart and I.

E. B. BROWNING.

FATE, I HAVE ASKED FEW GIFTS OF THEE.

FATE, I have asked few gifts of thee,
And fewer have to ask,
Ere long thou knowest I shall be
No more—then con thy task.

If there be one on earth so late
Whose love is like the past,
Tell her in whispers, gentle Fate,
Not love itself can last.

Tell her I leave the noisy feast
Of life, a little tired,
Of all its pleasures few possest
And fewer still desired.

Tell her with steady pace to come,
And where my laurels lie,
To drop one chaplet on my tomb
When it has caught her sigh.

Tell her to stand some steps apart,
Some steps apart that day,
And hide that tear, if tear should start,
Too precious for dull day.

W. S. LANDOR.

THE ROMANCE OF THE SWAN'S NEST.

LITTLE Ellie sits alone
'Mid the beeches of a meadow
By a stream-side on the grass
And the trees are showering down
Doubles of their leaves in shadow
On her shining hair and face.

She has thrown her bonnet by,
And her feet she has been dipping
In the shallow water's flow :
Now she holds them nakedly
In her hands, all sleek and dripping,
While she rocketh to and fro.

Little Ellie sits alone,
And the smile she softly uses
Fills the silence like a speech
While she thinks what shall be done,
And the sweetest pleasure chooses
For her future within reach.

Little Ellie in her smile
Chooses—" I will have a lover,
Riding on a steed of steeds :
He shall love me without guile,
And to *him* I will discover
The swan's nest among the reeds.

“And the steed shall be red-roan,
 And the lover shall be noble,
 With an eye that takes the breath :
 And the lute he plays upon
 Shall strike ladies into trouble,
 As his sword strikes men to death.

“And the steed it shall be shod
 All in silver, housed in azure,
 And the mane shall swim the wind ;
 And the hoofs along the sod
 Shall flash onward and keep measure,
 Till the shepherds look behind.

“But my lover will not prize
 All the glory that he rides in,
 When he gazes in my face :
 He will say, ‘O Love, thine eyes
 Build the shrine my soul abides in,
 And I kneel here for thy grace !’

“Then, ay, then he shall kneel low,
 With the red-roan steed anear him
 Which shall seem to understand,
 Till I answer, ‘Rise and go !
 For the world must love and fear him
 Whom I gift with heart and hand.’

“Then he will arise so pale,
 I shall feel my own lips tremble
 With a *yes* I must not say,
 Nathless maiden brave. ‘Farewell,’
 I will utter, and dissemble—
 ‘Light to-morrow with to-day !’

“Then he’ll ride among the hills
To the wide world past the river,
There to put away all wrong ;
To make straight distorted wills,
And to empty the broad quiver
Which the wicked bear along.

“Three times shall a young foot-page
Swim the stream and climb the mountain
And kneel down beside my feet—
‘Lo, my master sends this gage,
Lady, for thy pity’s counting !
What wilt thou exchange for it ?’

“And the first time, I will send
A white rose-bud for a guerdon,
And the second time, a glove ;
But the third time—I may bend
From my pride, and answer—‘Pardon,
If he comes to take my love.’

“Then the young foot-page will run,
Then my lover will ride faster,
Till he kneeleth at my knee :
‘I am a duke’s eldest son,
Thousand serfs do call me master,
But, O Love, I love but *thee* !’

“He will kiss me on the mouth
Then, and lead me as a lover
Through the crowds that praise his deeds :
And, when soul-tied by one troth,
Unto *him* I will discover
That swan’s nest among the reeds.”

Little Ellie with her smile
 Not yet ended rose up gently,
 Tied the bonnet, donned the shoe,
 And went homeward round a mile,
 Just to see, as she did daily,
 What more eggs were with the two.

Pushing through the elm-tree copse,
 Winding up the stream, light-hearted,
 Where the osier pathway leads,
 Past the boughs she stoops—and stops.
 Lo, the wild swan had deserted,
 And a rat had gnawed the reeds !

Ellie went home sad and slow.
 If she found the lover ever,
 With his red-roan steed of steeds,
 Sooth I know not ; but I know
 She could never show him—never,
 That swan's nest among the reeds !

E. B. BROWNING.

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreath'd with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last !
Ah, starry hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast !
A voice from out the future cries,
“ On ! on ! ”—but o'er the past
(Dim gulf !) my spirit hovering lies,
Mute, motionless, aghast !

For, alas, alas, with me
The light of life is o'er !
“ No more—no more—no more— ”
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar !

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams ;
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

EDGAR A. POE.

LIFE! WE'VE BEEN LONG TOGETHER.

LIFE ! we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather.
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear.
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time :
Say not "good night !" but in some happier clime,
Bid me "good morning."

ANON.

CONSOLATIONS.

L

OUR vale of life at either end
Is spanned by gates of gold ;
And when the wind against them strains,
Such harmony is rolled
From every echoing valve and bar,
Right on through all the vale afar,
That cliffs, and woods, the air, the ground
With rapture tremble in the sound.

II.

This earth is not so far from heaven ;
Bright angels from the skies,
To Faith revealed, where Sense is sealed,
Descend, and prayers arise.
Deep Sabbath of the trusting breast,
The solstice of a realm of rest,
Rich antepasts we have in thee
Of glory and eternity !

A. DE VERE.

SONNET.

Love to the tender ; peace to those who mourn ;
Hope to the hopeless, hope that does not fail,
Whose symbol is the anchor, not the sail ;
Glory that spreads to heaven's remotest bourn,
And to its centre doth again return
Like music ; health revisiting the frail ;
Freedom to those who pine in dungeons pale ;
Sorrows which God hath willed and Christ hath
worn ;
Omnipotence to be the poor man's shield ;
Light, uncreated light, to cheer the blind ;
Infinite mercy sent to heal and bind
All wounds encountered in life's well-worn field :
These are God's gifts to man, nor these alone—
Himself He gives to all who make those gifts their
own.

A. DE VERE.

THE SOUL'S PARTING.

SHE sat within Life's Banquet Hall at noon,
When word was brought unto her secretly,
" The Master cometh onwards quickly : soon
Across the Threshold He will call for thee."
Then she rose up to meet Him at the Door,
But turning, courteous, made a farewell brief
To those that sat around. From Care and Grief
She parted first : " Companions sworn and true
Have ye been ever to me, but for Friends
I knew ye not till later, and did miss
Much solace through that error ; let this kiss,
Late known and prized, be taken for amends ;
Thou, too, kind, constant Patience, with thy slow,
Sweet counsels aiding me ; I did not know
That ye were angels, until ye displayed
Your wings for flight : now bless me ! " but they said,
" We blest thee long ago."

Then turning unto twain
That stood together, tenderly and oft
She kissed them on their foreheads, whispering soft,
" Now must we part ; yet leave me not before
Ye see me enter safe within the Door ;
Kind bosom-comforters, that by my side
The darkest hour found ever closest bide,

A dark hour waits me, ere for evermore
Night with its heaviness be overpast ;
Stay with me till I cross the Threshold o'er."
So Faith and Hope stayed by her till the last.

But giving both her hands
To one that stood the nearest,—“ Thou and I
May pass together ; for the holy bands
God knits on earth are never loosed on high.
Long have I walked with Thee : thy name arose
E'en in my sleep, and sweeter than the close
Of music was thy voice ; for thou wert sent
To lead me homewards from my banishment
By devious ways, and never hath my heart
Swerved from Thee, though our hands were wrung
apart
By spirits sworn to sever us : above
Soon shall I look upon Thee as Thou art.”
So she crossed o'er with Love.

DORA GREENWELL.

November 12th, 1851.

UP-HILL.

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A bed for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labour you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yes, beds for all who come.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN.

COME, dear children, let us away ;
Down and away below !
Now my brothers call from the bay ;
Now the great winds shorewards blow ;
Now the salt tides seawards flow :
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss the spray.
Children dear, let us away,
This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—
Call once yet !
In a voice that she will know :
“ Margaret ! Margaret ! ”
Children’s voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother’s ear :
Children’s voices, wild with pain.
Surely she will come again.
Call her once and come away,
This way, this way !
“ Mother dear ! we cannot stay.”
The wild white horses foam and fret,
Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down !
 Call no more !
 One last look at the white-wall'd town,
 And the little grey church on the windy shore ;
 Then come down.
 She will not come though you call all day.
 Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
 In the caverns where we lay,
 Through the surf and through the swell,
 The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
 Where the winds are all asleep ;
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam ;
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream ;
 Where the sea-beasts ranged all around
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
 Where great whales come sailing by,
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
 Round the world for ever and aye ?
 When did music come this way ?
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
 (Call yet once) that she went away ?
 Once she sate with you and me,
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee.
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
 When down swung the sound of the far-off bell,

She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green
sea,

She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah, me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman ! here with thee."
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves !
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea
caves."

She smiled, she went up through the surf in the
bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?

" The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan,
Long prayers," I said, " in the world they say.
Come," I said ; and we rose through the surf in the
bay,

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd
town,

Through the narrow paved streets, where all was
still,

To the little grey church on the windy hill.

From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing airs,
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones, worn with
rains,

And we gazed up the aisle through the small-
leaded panes.

She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :

" Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here.

Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone ;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."

But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book !
“Loud prays the priest : shut stands the door,”
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down !
Down to the depths of the sea !
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark, what she sings : “O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy,
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well—
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun.”
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand ;
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children,
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder ;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber

When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing, "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she !
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the Sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low ;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom :
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie ;
Over banks of bright sea-weed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down,
Singing, "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she,
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the Sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

TIME AND TIDE.

As I was walkin' on the strand,
I spied ane auld man sit
On ane auld black rock ; an' aye the waves
Cam washin' up its fit ;
His lips they gaed as gin they wad tilt,
But his sang he cud only say ;
An' it was but an owercome, waeosome and
dreigh—

O' the words he had nae mae :
“ Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns ;
They played thegither i' th' gloamin's hush :
Up cam the tide and the moone and the stems,
And pairtit the twa wi' a glint an' a gush.”

“ What can the auld man mean,” quo' I,
“ Sittin' o' the auld black rock ?
The tide creeps up wi' a moan an' a cry,
An' a hiss 'maist like a mock.
The words he mutters mae be the en'
O' some weary dreary sang—
A deid thing floatin' aboot in his brain,
‘At the tide will no lat gang.’”

“ Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,
They played thegither i' th' gloamin's hush :
Up cam the tide and the moone and the stems,
And pairtit the twa wi' a glint an' a gush.”

"Hoo pairtit it them, auld man?" I said;

"Was't the sea cam up ower strang?

But gin thegither the twa o' them gaed,

Their pairtin' wasna lang.

Or was ane ta'en, and the ither left—

Ane to sing, ane to greit?

It's unco sair to be sae bereft—

But there's ither tides at yer feet."

Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,

And they played thegither i' th' gloamin's hush:

p cam the tide and the mune and the sterns,

And pairtit the twa wi' a glint an' a gush."

"Was't the sea o' space wi' its tide o' time?

Sic droonin' s waur to bide;

But Death's a diver, seekin' ye

Aneath its chokin' tide;

An' ye'll gaze again in ither's ee,

Far abune space and time."

Never ae word he answered me,

But he changed a word in his rhyme:

Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,

And they played thegither upo' the shore:

p cam the tide and the mune and the sterns,

And pairtit the twa for evermore."

"May be, auld man, 'twas the tide o' change

That crap atween the twa?

Hech! that's a droonin' awfu' strange,

And waur than ane an' a'!"

He said nae mair. I luikit, and saw

The lips nae mair cud gang;

Ane o' the tides had ta'en him awa'—

An' ower him I croont his ain sang:

“ Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,
And they played thegither upo’ the shore :
Up cam the tide and the mune and the sterns,
And souft them awa’ throu a mirksome door !”

GEORGE MACDONALD.

LOVE'S GOLDEN SEEDS.

Love from my hand in life's young years
The golden seeds outflung,
A thousand ears of sighs and tears
From every seed upsprung.

I sowed them broad and wide and deep,
Love's golden seeds in hope's fair field,
Sure of the harvest they would yield
When it was time to reap ;
But when I went with hopes and fears
To reap the grain so sweet and young,
A thousand ears of sighs and tears
From every seed had sprung.

I laboured hard the cause to trace,
I spared no noxious weed,
I studied season, time, and place,
To reap the golden seed ;
But vain were all my cares, my fears,
The hopes and fears to which I clung—
A thousand ears of sighs and tears
From every seed upsprung.

With tears perpetual from mine eyes
I watered well the seed,
And all the land around that lies
From thorny thistles freed :
Too well ! too well ! The thorn appears
The glistening tears among—
A thousand ears of sighs and tears
From every seed have sprung.

DENIS FLORENCE MACCARTHY.

DUTY.

I REACH a duty, yet I do it not,
And therefore see no higher: but, if done,
My view is brighten'd, and another spot
Seen on my moral sun.

For, be the duty high as angel's flight,
Fulfil it, and a higher will arise,
E'en from its ashes. Duty is infinite—
Receding as the skies.

And thus it is, the purest most deplore
Their want of purity. As fold by fold,
In duties done, falls from their eyes, the more
Of Duty they behold.

Were it not wisdom, then, to close our eyes
On duties crowding only to appal?
No: Duty is our ladder to the skies,
And, climbing not, we fall.

ROBERT LEIGHTON.

WEAVING.

At morn I saw them weaving
To a pleasant tune,
And I knew the rending and the grieving
Would come ere afternoon.

The tints were fair and spangled,
And they wove with guileless art,
But every thread they tangled
Was dipt in hues of heart.

Happy dreamful singers !
Sitting at the loom,
Broidering in with eager fingers,
Flowers of fairest bloom.

Blue the sea before them,
Far the mountains blue,
But behind stern destiny o'er them
Dark her shadows threw.

Alas ! when all is ended,
And they are doomed to part,
And every thread that's rended
Is the fibre of a heart.

J. C. SHARP.

THE BALLAD OF THE BRIDES OF QUAIR.

A STILLNESS crept about the house,
At evenfall, in noon-tide glare ;
Upon the silent hills looked forth
The many-windowed House of Quair.

The peacock on the terrace screamed ;
Browsed on the lawn the timid hare ;
The great trees grew i' the avenue,
Calm by the sheltered House of Quair.

The pool was still ; around its brim
The alders sickened all the air ;
There came no murmur from the streams,
Though nigh flowed Leithen, Tweed, and Quair.

The days hold on their wonted pace,
And men to court and camp repair,
Their part to fill, of good or ill,
While women keep the House of Quair.

And one is clad in widow's weeds,
And one is maiden-like and fair,
And day by day they seek the paths
About the lonely fields of Quair.

A A

'To see the trout leap in the streams,
The summer clouds reflected there,
The maiden loves in pensive dreams,
To hang o'er silver Tweed and Quair.

Within, in pall-black velvet clad,
Sits stately in her oaken chair—
A stately dame of ancient name—
The mother of the House of Quair.

Her daughter broiders by her side,
With heavy drooping golden hair,
And listens to her frequent plaint,
" Ill fare the Brides that come to Quair :

" For more than one hath lived in pine,
And more than one hath died of care,
And more than one hath sorely sinned,
Left lonely in the House of Quair.

" Alas ! and ere thy father died,
I had not in his heart a share,
And now—may God forfend her ill—
Thy brother brings his Bride to Quair ! "

She came : they kissed her in the hall,
They kissed her on the winding stair,
They led her to her chamber high,
The fairest in the House of Quair.

They bade her from the window look,
And mark the scene how passing fair,
Among whose ways the quiet days
Would linger o'er the wife of Quair.

“*Tis fair,*” she said on looking forth,
“But what although ‘twere bleak and bare :”—
She looked the love she did not speak,
And broke the ancient curse of Quair—

“Where’er he dwells, where’er he goes,
His dangers and his toils I share ;”
What need, he said,—she was not one
Of the ill-fated Brides of Quair !

ISA CRAIG.

NEVER TO KNOW.

ONE within in a crimson glow,
Silently sitting ;
One without on the fallen snow,
Wearily flitting ;
Never to know
That one looked out with yearning sighs,
While one looked in with wistful eyes,
And went unwitting.

What came of the one without, that so
Wearily wended ?
Under the stars and under the snow
His journey ended !
Never to know
That the answer came to those wistful eyes,
But passed away in those yearning sighs,
With night winds blended.

What came of the one within, that so
Yearned forth with sighing ?
More sad, to my thinking, her fate, the glow
Drearly dying ;
Never to know
That for a moment her life was nigh,
And she knew it not, and it passed her by,
Recall denying.

These were two hearts that long ago—
 Dreaming and waking—
Each to a poet revealed its woe,
 Wasting and breaking ;
 Never to know
That if each to other had but done so,
Both had rejoiced in the crimson glow,
And one had not lain 'neath the stars and snow,
 Forsaken—forsaking.

ISA CRAIG.

**ONE WRITES, THAT “OTHER FRIENDS
REMAIN.”**

One writes, that “Other friends remain,”
That “Loss is common to the race”—
And common is the common-place,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter, rather more :
Too common ! never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be
Who pledges now thy gallant son,
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath still'd the life that beat from thee !

O mother, praying God will save
Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave !

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well ;
Who mused on all I had to tell,
And something written, something thought ;

Expecting still his advent home ;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,
Or here to-morrow will he come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair ;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love !

For now her father's chimney glows
In expectation of a guest ;
And thinking "this will please him best,"
She takes a ribbon or a rose.

For he will see them on to-night ;
And with the thought her colour burns ;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right ;

And even when she turn'd, the curse
Had fallen, and her future lord
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

Oh what to her shall be the end ?
And what to me remains of good ?
To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me, no *second* friend.

A. TENNYSON.

RING OUT, WILD BELLS.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light :
The year is dying in the night ;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
The year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife ;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times ;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite ;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

A. TENNYSON.

THE MAIDEN AND CHARON.*

A ROMAIC BALLAD.

SHE had nine noble brothers,
This beautiful young Maid,
And of old gloomy Charon
Not much was she afraid.

Young Kostas her betrothèd
Of four estates was heir,
And for old gloomy Charon
Right little did she care.

But Charon like a bird flew past,
And shot his deathly dart,
Flew like a coal-black swallow,
And pierced her to the heart.

Then deep, deep did her father sigh,
And loud her mother moan,
“O my one only daughter,
My fair, my only one !”

And down the valley Kostas came,
With twice three hundred men,
And sixty-two musicians,
Along the mountain glen.

* Charon is the *Death* of the modern Greeks.

“ Oh ! stop the marriage jubilee,
Musicians, play no more ;
Oh, stop awhile, for I can see
A cross upon the door.

“ It may be one of her brethren
Lies wounded on his bed ;
Perchance her old grandfather
Is dying now, or dead.

He spurreth to the churchyard
His steed so black and brave,
And there he finds the Sacristan
Digging in a grave.

“ O Sacristan, be greeted—
For whom that grave ? ” he cries.
“ ’Tis for a fair young Maiden,
Her with the beautiful eyes ;

“ Who had nine noble brothers
Within her father’s gates,
And Kostas for her bridegroom,
The heir of four estates.”

“ O Sacristan, I pray thee,
Now dig the grave more wide,
Now dig it wide enough for two
To rest there side by side.”

He drew his golden-hilted sword,
He plunged it in his breast,
And there the young betrothèd lie
Side by side at rest.

W. ALLINGHAM.

REQUIEM IN THE SOUTH.

THOU hast no charm to turn the edge of Sorrow,
 Bird of the mournful strain !
From thee doth Love a love more fervent borrow,
 But Pain a sharper pain.

Why sing so loud, the passion-dream recalling,
 That ceased in sudden gloom ?
Why sing from boughs, whose ripened bloom is
 falling
 Upon a maiden's tomb ?

There needs no prompter for the love, belonging
 To that sweet memory ;
The heart's wild outcry, not its perished longing,
 Demands a voice from thee.

The blackness of a grief that will not soften
 Clings round me through the day,
And to the grave that hides her, wandering often,
 I weep the nights away.

In this fierce sorrow there is no partaker,
 It seeks no healing balm :
Yet, though my lamentations cannot wake her,
 The exhausted heart grows calm.

Here, filled with sorrows of its own creation,
 The night-wind swells and dies ;
And, drooping in their dull commiseration,
 The palms around me rise.

Here, from the fury of my passion fleeing,
 The barriers slowly fret,
Which dam the restless river of my being
 To stagnate in regret.

And I may conquer this o'ermastering anguish,
 And find my peace again ;
The manly heart must sometime cease to languish,
 Ruled by the manly brain.

And what is wax shall be as steel within me,
 And be my fortune then ;
All soft indulgence powerless to win me
 From the stern ways of men.

And let them say "his heart is cold and cruel,
 He knows not love's desire :"
I gave the essence of my life as fuel
 To one extinguished fire.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE ANGEL SANDALPHON.

HAVE you read in the Talmud of old,
In the legends the Rabbins have told,
 Of the limitless realms of the air?
Have you read it,—the marvellous story
Of Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory,
 Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer?

How, erect, at the outermost gates
Of the City Celestial he waits,
 With his feet on the ladder of light
That, crowded with angels unnumbered,
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered,
 Alone in the desert at night?

The Angels of Wind and of Fire
Chant only one hymn, and expire
 With the song's irresistible stress;
Expire in their rapture and wonder
As harp-strings are broken asunder
 By music they throb to express.

But serene in the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song,
 With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands listening breathless
 To sounds that ascend from below;—

From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls that entreat and implore
 In the fervour and passion of prayer ;
From the hearts that are broken with losses,
And weary with dragging the crosses,
 Too heavy for mortals to bear.

And he gathers the prayers as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
 Into garlands of purple and red ;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal,
 Is wasted the fragrance they shed.

It is but a legend, I know,—
A fable, a phantom, a show,
 Of the ancient Rabbinical lore ;
Yet the old mediæval tradition,
The beautiful, strange superstition,
 But haunts me and holds me the more.

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
 All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing,
Sandalphon the Angel, expanding
 His pinions in nebulous bars.

And the legend, I feel, is a part
Of the hunger and thirst of the heart,
 The frenzy and fire of the brain,
That grasps at the fruitage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
 To quiet its fever and pain.

LONGFELLOW.

FROM HOUSE TO HOME.

THE first was like a dream through summer heat,
The second like a tedious numbing swoon,
While the half-frozen pulses lagged to beat
Beneath a winter moon.

"But," says my friend, "what was this thing and where?"
It was a pleasure-place within my soul;
An earthly Paradise supremely fair,
That lured me from the goal.

The first part was a tissue of hugged lies;
The second was its ruin fraught with pain:
Why raise the fair delusion to the skies
But to be dashed again?

My castle stood of white transparent glass,
Glittering and frail with many a fretted spire;
But when the summer sunset came to pass,
It kindled into fire.

My pleasaunce was an undulating green,
Stately with trees whose shadows slept below,
With glimpses of smooth garden-beds between,
Like flame or sky or snow.

Swift squirrels on the pastures took their ease,
With leaping birds safe from the unfeared knife ;
All singing-birds rejoicing in those trees,
Fulfilled their careless life.

Wood-pigeons cooed there, stock-doves nestled
there ;
My trees were full of songs and flowers and fruit ;
Their branches spread a city to the air,
And mice lodged in their root.

My heath lay further off, where lizards lived
In strange metallic mail, just spied and gone ;
Like darted lightnings here and there perceived,
But nowhere dwelt upon.

Frogs and fat toads were there to hop or plod,
And propagate in peace, an uncouth crew,
Where velvet-headed rushes rustling nod,
And spill the morning dew.

All caterpillars threw beneath my rule,
With snails and slugs in corners out of sight ;
I never marred the curious sudden stool
That perfects in a night.

Safe in his excavated gallery,
The burrowing mole groped on from year to year ;
No harmless hedgehog curled, because of me,
His prickly back for fear.

Ofttimes one like an angel walked with me,
With spirit-discerning eyes like flames of fire,
But deep as the unfathomed endless sea,
Fulfilling my desire.

And sometimes like a snowdrift he was fair,
 And sometimes like a sunset glorious red,
 And sometimes he had wings to scale the air
 With aureole round his head.

We sang our songs together by the way,
 Calls and recalls and echoes of delight ;
 So communed we together all the day,
 And so in dreams by night.

I have no words to tell what way we walked,
 What unforgotten path now closed and sealed ;
 I have no words to tell all things we talked,
 All things that he revealed :

This only can I tell ; that hour by hour
 I waxed more feastful, lifted up and glad ;
 I felt no thorn-prick when I plucked a flower,
 Felt not my friend was sad.

“ To-morrow,” once I said to him with smiles ;
 “ To-night,” he answered gravely and was dumb,
 But pointed out the stones that numbered miles,
 And miles and miles to come.

“ Not so,” I said : “ to-morrow shall be sweet ;
 To-night is not so sweet as coming days.”
 Then first I saw that he had turned his feet,
 Had turned from me his face :

Running and flying miles and miles he went,
 But once looked back to beckon with his hand
 And cry, “ Come home, O love, from banishment ;
 Come to the distant land.”

That night destroyed me like an avalanche ;
One night turned all my summer back to snow :
Next morning not a bird upon my branch,
Not a lamb woke below,—

No bird, no lamb, no living breathing thing ;
No squirrel scampered on my breezy lawn,
No mouse lodged by his hoard ; all joys took wing,
And fled before that dawn.

Azure and sun were starved from heaven above,
No dew had fallen, but biting frost lay hoar ;
O love, I knew that I should meet my love,
Should find my love no more.

“ My love no more,” I muttered, stunned with
 pain ;
I shed no tear, I wrung no passionate hand,
Till something whispered : “ You shall meet again,
Meet in a distant land.”

Then with a cry like famine I arose,
I lit my candle, searched from room to room,
Searched up and down ; a war of winds that froze,
Swept through the blank of gloom.

I searched day after day, night after night ;
Scant change there came to me of night or day :
“ No more,” I wailed, “ no more ;” and trimmed
 my light,
And gnashed, but did not pray.

Until my heart broke and my spirit broke,
Upon the frost-bound floor I stumbled, fell,
And moaned : “ It is enough : withhold the stroke.
Farewell, O love, farewell !”

Then life swooned from me. And I heard the
song

Of spheres and spirits rejoicing over me.
One cried : "Our sister, she hath suffered long."
One answered : " Make her see."—

One cried : " O blessed she who no more pain,
Who no more disappointment shall receive."
One answered : " Not so : she must live again;
Strengthen thou her to live."

So, while I lay entranced, a curtain seemed
To shrivel with crackling from before my face;
Across mine eyes a waxing radiance beamed
And showed a certain place.

I saw a vision of a woman, where
Night and new morning strove for domination;
Incomparably pale, and almost fair,
And sad beyond expression.

Her eyes were like some fire-enshining gem,
Were stately like the stars, and yet were tender;
Her figure charmed me like a windy stem,
Quivering and drooped and slender.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,
She stood on inner ground that budded flowers;
While circling in their never-slackening round,
Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,
And every thorn shot upright from its sands,
To gall her feet ; hoarse laughter pealed in scorn
With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not shrink ; her
strength
Was strung up until daybreak of delight ;
She measured measureless sorrow towards its
length,
And breadth, and depth, and height.

Then marked I how a chain sustained her form,
A chain of living links not made nor riven :
It stretched sheer up through lightning, wind, and
storm,
And anchored fast in heaven.

One cried : " How long ? Yet founded on the
Rock,
She shall do battle, suffer, and attain."
One answered : " Faith quakes in the tempest
shock :
Strengthen her soul again."

I saw a cup sent down and come to her
Brim full of loathing and of bitterness ;
She drank with livid lips that seemed to stir
The depth, not make it less.

And as she drank I spied a hand distil
New wine and virgin honey ; making it
First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed, until
She tasted only sweet.

Her lips and cheeks waxed rosy, fresh, and young ;
Drinking she sang : " My soul shall nothing want ; "
And drank anew : while soft a song was sung,
A mystical slow chant.

One cried : "The wounds are faithful of a friend:
 The wilderness shall blossom as a rose."—
 One answered : "Rend the veil, declare the end,
 Strengthen her ere she goes."

Then earth and heaven were rolled up like a scroll ;
 Time and space, change and death, had passed away ;
 Weight, number, measure, each had reached its whole ;
 The day had come, that day !

Multitudes—multitudes—stood up in bliss,
 Made equal to the angels, glorious, fair ;
 With harps, palms, wedding-garments, kiss of peace,
 And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in the height,
 Harping with harps to Him Who is Strong and True,
 They drank new wine, their eyes saw with new light,
 Lo, all things were made new.

Tier beyond tier they rose and rose and rose
 So high that it was dreadful, flames with flames ;
 No man could number them, no tongue disclose
 Their secret sacred names.

As though one pulse stirred all, one rush of blood
 Fed all, one breath swept through them myriad-voiced,
 They struck their harps, cast down their crowns,
 they stood
 And worshipped and rejoiced.

Each face looked one way, like a moon new-lit,
Each face looked one way towards its Sun of Love
Drank love and bathed in love and mirrored it,
And knew no end thereof.

Glory touched glory on each blessed head,
Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more :
These were the new-begotten from the dead,
Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered soul at rest,
Double against each other, filled, sufficed ;
All loving, loved of all ; but loving best,
And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in pain,
Who trod on thorns, who drank the loathsome
cup :
The lost in night, in day was found again ;
The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blessed noon,
They sang together through the length of days ;
Each loving face bent sunwards like a moon
New-lit with love and praise.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if I might
Rebuild my house of lies, wherein I joyed
One time to dwell ; my soul shall walk in white,
Cast down, but not destroyed.

Therefore, in patience I possess my soul ;
Yea, therefore, as a flint I set my face,
To pluck down, to build up again the whole—
But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;
This cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:
My face is steadfast towards Jerusalem—
My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble knees—
I, precious more than seven times molten gold—
Until the day when from his storehouses
God shall bring new and old;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness:
Although to-day I fade as doth a leaf,
I languish and grow less.

Although to-day He prunes my twigs with pain,
Yet doth his blood nourish and warm my root:
To-morrow I shall put forth buds again,
And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious ways,
To-day his staff is turned into a rod,
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days,
And stay upon my God.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE WHITE DOVE.

(FROM THE SWEDISH.)

THERE sitteth a dove so white and fair,
All on the lily spray,
And she listeneth when to our Saviour dear
The little children pray.

Lightly she spreads her friendly wings,
And to heaven's gate hath sped,
And unto the Father in heaven she bears
The prayers that the children have said.

And back she comes from heaven's gate,
And brings—that dove so mild—
From the Father in heaven who hears her speak,
A blessing for every child.

Then, children, lift up a pious prayer ;
It hears whatever you say,
That heavenly dove so white and fair
That sits on the lily spray.

F. BREMER.

SHE HAD BEEN TOLD.

SHE had been told that God made all the stars
That twinkled up in heaven ; and now she stood
Watching the coming of the twilight on,
As if it were a new and perfect world,
And this were its first eve. She stood alone
By the low window, with the silken lash
Of her soft eye upraised, and her sweet mouth
Half-parted with the new and strange delight
Of beauty that she could not comprehend,
And had not seen before the purple folds
Of the low sunset clouds, and the blue sky
That looked so still and delicate above,
Filled her young heart with gladness ; and the eve
Stole on with its deep shadows, and she still
Stood looking at the West, with that half smile,
As if a pleasant thought were at her heart.
Presently in the edge of the last tint
Of sunset, where the blue was melted in
To the faint golden mellowness, a star
Stood suddenly. A laugh of wild delight
Burst from her lips, and putting up her hands,
Her simple thought broke forth expressively :
“ Father, dear father, God has made a star.”

WILLIS.

A DIRGE.

SOFTLY ! she is lying
With her lips apart :
Softly ! she is dying
Of a broken heart.

Whisper ! she is going
To her final rest :
Whisper ! life is growing
Dim within her breast.

Gently ! she is sleeping,
She has breathed her last :
Gently ! while you are weeping
She to Heaven has past.

C. GAMAGE EASTMAN.

WEARINESS.

O LITTLE feet ! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
 Must ache and bleed beneath your load ;
I, nearer to the wayside inn
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
 Am weary, thinking of your road.

O little hands ! that, weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
 Have still so long to give or ask ;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,
 Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts ! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
 Such limitless and strong desires ;
Mine that so long has glowed and burned
With passions into ashes turned,
 Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls ! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light

Direct from heaven, their source divine ;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
How lurid looks this soul of mine !

LONGFELLOW.

THE PATH OF DUTY.

Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

A. TENNYSON.

ASK ME NO MORE.

Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give ?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :
I strove against the stream and all in vain :
Let the great river take me to the main :
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
 Ask me no more !

A. TENNYSON.

OH, SAD NO MORE !

OH, sad no more ! Oh, sweet no more !
Oh, strange no more !
By a moss'd brook bank, on a stone,
I smelt a wild weed flower alone :
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gush'd out with tears.
Surely, all pleasant things had gone before,
Low buried fathom deep beneath with thee,
No more !

A. TENNYSON.

THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE.

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

A. TENNYSON.

THE CURSE OF THE GUDMUNDS.

(AN ICELAND LEGEND.)

A WHITE elf sits by the churchyard gate—
The hour is past,—it is growing late ;
In her arms she carries an elfin child,
And over it murmurs a song most wild.

The bells ring out for the Sunday prayer,
The elf can go no nearer there ;
The crowd in its eagerness hurries by,
And gives no heed to her deep, deep sigh.

The bells are dumb in the old church tower,
“Andreas ! where art thou ? ‘Tis past the hour !”
The hours roll’d on, and no one came
Andreas Gudmund ! art *thou* to blame ?

The shadows deepen’d, and no one came :
“ Andreas Gudmund ! art *thou* to blame ?
Have the blue eyes of thine elfin child
No charms for thee with their beauty wild ?

“ I am not baptized. I will not come near,
Thou know’st, my love, I should quake for fear ;
I have placed on the stone a golden cup,
Let the angels carry mine offerings up !

I might have married an elf of light,
With foxglove helmet, and armour white ;
By *thee*, Andreas, was I beguiled,
Now make thine infant a Christian child.

Thou hast promised, Andreas, and I am here ;
Thy father will come for thee, child most dear.
A blessing shall fall on thy forehead white
Unknown to thy mother, the elf of light !”

She waited and moan'd, but no one came ;
His craven spirit must bear the blame ;
The bells rang out, and the prayers are done,—
She is all alone with the setting sun !

The babe in her arms, with its wild blue eyes,
Looks up in her face in weird surprise ;
“ Thy father, my child, is ashamed of thee ;
I will know how he will welcome a curse from me !

“ Curse on the coward who broke his vow,
On the lying lips and the lying brow ;
May he bear for ever about the land
A downcast eye, and a leper's hand !

She turn'd away with a laugh so wild,
It frightened even her elfin child ;
The shadows of night are cold and grey,
The white elves laugh, and the Christians pray !

For ever, for ever, on sea, on land
A Gudmund carries a leper's hand,
His left hand beareth no mark of woe,
But his right is always as white as snow.

E. H. MITCHELL.

AFTER A FUNERAL.

I.

An hour to die,
A week to lie,
And they lay in its coffer the worn robe by ;
The robe of the flesh all frayed and torn
With the wear of the world and its many a thorn.
We shall see it no more ;—each hath sped to its
goal,
Life-long confederates, body and soul,
One at our feet in the holy sward,
And one far away at the gates of the Lord.

II.

Dreary the change
In a narrow range
Which comes over parsonage, hall, or grange,
When life's last volume of labour and love
Is shut with a clasp we cannot remove ;
Closed are its pictures, music, and prayers,
Youth's blotted histories, chapters of cares,
Only the echoes, only the shades
Flit up and down thro' memory's glades,
Watched for at night, when, slumber apart,
We study our grief by the lamp of the heart.

III.

Blank and bleak
Is the world to the weak,
All bereft with a home to seek.
But the widow must rise from the cold hearthstone
Ere cometh the stranger to claim his own ;
She must seek for a home wherein to weep
Ere stranger eyes thro' the doorway peep ;
Ere strange notes ring from the old church pew,
Ere the white slab gleameth icy and new
From the chancel wall ; so, dark and away
In a corner kneeleth the widow grey,
And sorrowing orphans sob around,
Pale and craped, with eyes on the ground ;
And they linger last in the green churchyard,
And water with tears the fresh green sward,
As they think that no flower, or sunshine, or rain
Shall gladden the sleeper—oh ! never again !

IV.

Blessed be faith,
Which smiling saith,
No sorrow hath heaven, nor tears, nor death ;
So they turn from the gates, and the lilacs they
planted,
In the garden by loved ones for ever haunted,
And they breathe the effectual fervent prayer,
And they feel in their silence the Comforter there,
And they pass the first smile from face to face,
Elder to younger, dear hearts to brace.
Now work may not wait,—for time is strong,
And stayeth no more for psalm than song ;
And mirth and agony, right and wrong,
He whirleth them all with the stars along.

Yet the breath of his rushing is wholesome and sweet,
And he dries up our tears as the dew at our feet,
Lighting the desolate twilights of care
With sunny humanities ardent and fair.
So again cometh joy as tho' sorrow were not
And the clouds roll away to some distant spot,
For there rageth no storm between birth and death
But ye can conquer it, time and faith !
Till side by side in the tranquil tomb
With joy and sorrow we bide our doom.

ANON.

SONG.

HE called to the Past, "Come back!"
But she shook her golden hair,
And smiled from the brink of the torrent black
Which never bridge might bear.

Of the Future, thro' haze and rack
He asked, "Art thou as fair?"
There came a sigh down the ancient track,
And a shriek, "Forbear—forbear!"

ANON.

IRENE.

“Ye have done it unto me.”

I.

THE moonlight lay like hoar-frost on the earth
Outside. But, all within, the marble hearth
Made from its dropping logs of scented wood
A rosy dimness of warm light, to flood
With fervid interchange of gloom and gleam
That gorgeous chamber, from the mad moonbeam
Curtain'd secure. No other light was there.
The outer halls were silent everywhere.
Midnight. And in the bed where he was born,
I' the Porphyry Chamber at Byzance, outworn
By seventeen years of pleasure without joy,
Not yet a man, albeit no more a boy,
His flush't cheek heavy on the fragrant sheet,
Slept Constantine the Porphyrogenete ;
When glided in his mother leonine,
Irene.

II.

She, reluctant to resign
To her own whelp that prey beneath her paw,
The bloody empire, stealthily 'gan draw
The crimson curtain ; with keen ear down-bent
To count the breathings, thick and indolent,

Of her recaptured cub ; who sleeping smiled,
By visions lewd of folly and lust beguiled.
Anon she beckon'd to the unshut door :
Whence, crafty footed, down the glassy floor
Crept to her side (with wither'd features white
Bow'd o'er a trembling lamp) her parasite,
Storax, the lean-lipped, low-brow'd Logothete.

III.

“ Set the lamp down,” the mother mutter’d. “ Sweet
Must be his dreams. My son is smiling—see !
Wake him not, Storax ! ” Then, while softly she
Let fall the curtain, he from out its sheath
Slided his dagger, pusht the flame beneath
The weapon’s point, and watch’d with moody eye
The heated metal reddening.

O’er the high
Bed-head (to safeguard sleeping Cæsars, slung
Slant from the golden-sculptured cornice) hung
On dismal ebon cross limbs, carven keen
In livid ivory, of a stretch’d-out, lean,
And, ever-dying Christ.

IV.

(For, not long since,—
As rapturous priests remember, to evince
For God’s Church Orthodox her filial zeal,
Irene’s righteous regency,—with heel
Set on the heads heretical of all
Iconoclasts, had rescued from their fall
The Images of God—assaulted sore
Erewhile by Antichrist’s mad emperor,—
Copronymus)

v.

. His white lips set
 Fast with a formidable will. While yet
 Storax, who turned and turned it slowly, scann'd
 The reddening steel, Irene's rapid hand,
 With restless finger o'er her pucker'd brow
 Flitting, made airy crosses in a row.
 Her eyes had settled sullenly upon
 The super-impending image of God's Son :
 And habit,—that hard mock-bird of the mind,
 Whose tongue, to chance-got utterance confined,
 Memories by chance recaptured out of place
 Set talking out of season,—to the Face
 Mechanic response making, "*If thine eye*
Offend thee, pluck it out," she mutter'd. "Ay,
 That is sound Gospel." Storax in her ear
 Whispered : "The thing is white-hot now.
 See here,"
 "And I am empress," hissed Irene. "Smite!"

vi.

The arm'd Armenian on the guard that night
 About the palace precincts somnolent,
 Where, like a weary beetle, came and went
 Across the flinty platform,—else dead-dumb
 The slumbrous city's desultory hum,—
 Heard, pacing drowsy-cold (his watch nigh done)
 Beneath the stars, thro' shrivelling silence run
 A sudden scream, fierce, devilish, agonized,
 Of quintessential pain ; and all surprised
 Started upon the watch,—waiting what sound
 Should follow. But that dreadful cry, soon drown'd
 In dreadful silence, response none uproused,
 Save of an owlish echo half unhoused

Among the moody towers, that down again
With churlish mumblings in her mason'd den
Settled to slumber.

Then the soldier said,
Laughing at the discovery he had made
Of what, to *him* at least, that sound meant. "Lo !
To-morrow, and the amphoræ shall flow,
Increase of pay to all the Armenian guard !"
Whereat he turn'd, and (while i' the East, black
barred
With lazy clouds, slow oozed a watery light)
Waited, well pleased, the trump of dawn.

VII.

That night,
In league with hell, ere morning streak'd the skies,
Left all its darkness in the misused eyes
Of Constantine the Porphyrogenete :
The shadow of a shadow, forced to fleet
Out of the glare that gave him in men's sight
The semblance of a substance once.

VIII.

That night,
Irene, ere the Porphyry Chamber (pale
With strife wherein to triumph is to fail)
She left triumphant, glancing back, her glance
Fell casual on the conscious countenance
Of that white Christ upon the black cross spread,
Whose eyes, into the now close-curtained bed
Erewhile down gazing, had beheld why those
Light draperies round it had been twitched so close.
And lo ! where late those witnesses had been,
Instead of eyes, two gory sockets, seen

Thro' the red firelight, stopp'd her, stagger'd her,
 And to a tear, wherewom she dared not stir,
 Fasten'd and froze her.

For a while she stood,
 As one that traversing a solitude
 Where nothing dwells but danger (all in haste
 To reach the end, and, after peril faced
 And pass'd, proclaim "the deed I dared is
 done !")

Turns, by ill-chance, midway, to gaze upon
 Some hideous gulf in safety cross'd ; and so
 Seeing how deep the death that yawns below,
 By an anticipated terror, just
 In the fresh moment of achievement, thrust
 Into the suddenly suggested jaws
 Of an imaginary failure, draws
 Breath faint and fainter ; forced to keep in sight
 His own success, which, seen, defeats him quite.

. . . . At the sculptured wreath
 Above the unblest bed wherefrom It hung,
 She, like a wounded cat o' the mountain, sprung,
 And caught, and gripp'd, and tugg'd, and tore
 away,
 And crouch'd with glaring face above, her prey,
 God's image.

Still that dreadful dearth of eyes
 In the dread Face !

With fierce and bitter cries
 She dasht It sharp against the marble floor,
 And bruised It with wild feet.

Still as before
 The Eyeless Face implied. . . . "Do what thou
 wilt
 Henceforth, and hug thy gain, or hate thy guilt,
 Never shalt thou behold God's eyes."

She snatch'd
And hurl'd It on the smouldering hearth: and
watch'd
The embers quicken round It: heap'd up wood,
And made the blaze leap high: and all night stood
Feeding the flame: till all was burn'd away
To ashes.

And ere this was done, the day
Began to dawn.

IX.

Afterwards, she became
One of the world's chief rulers. Her fair name
Was praised in all the churches. God's priests
pray'd
God to safeguard the mighty throne she made
Illustrious.

Three times,—in the hippodrome
Once, in the palace once, once 'neath the dome
O' the high cathedral,—the Estates took oath
After this fashion. "Witness Christ! we
both

Swear, on the Gospels four, to guard the throne
Of our Liege Lady, thine anointed one,
Irene, and swear also, bearing leal
Allegiance to her person, for her weal
And in her service, ever to oppose
Our lives against the persons of her foes."
This on the wood of the True Cross they swore.
And their recorded oath, with many more,
Among the relics of the saintly dead,
On the main altar was deposited
In St. Sophia.

Four patricians, proud
So to be seen of the applausive crowd,

Held in their hands the golden reins of four
 White horses, pacing in high pomp before
 Her festive chariot, when Irene pass'd
 Along the loud streets, greeted by the vast
 Vociferation of a land's applause.

X.

To all the Roman world she set wise laws.
 Men praised her wisdom. Wealth was hers im-
 mense.

Men praised her splendour and munificence.
 Alms to the poor her hand distributed.
 Men praised her bounty. High she held her head
 Amid the tempests of a turbulent time.
 Men praised her courage. Cruelty and crime
 She scourged with scorpions. Men her justice
 praised.

Gifts to the Church she gave, and altars raised.
 Men praised her piety. She in the West
 Treaties proposed and embassies addressed
 To Charlemagne. She in the East maintain'd
 On equal terms alliance und disdain'd
 With great Haroun Alraschid. "For," said she,
 "We understand each other's worth, We Three."
 The world, when speaking of her, said, "The
 Great."

XI.

At last her fortune changed.

For 'twas her fate
 To win a worthier title. So, one night
 The eunuchs of her palace—slaves whose spite
 Her power had scorn'd,—conspiring its downfall,
 Pluck'd the throne from her; seized her treasures
 all:

And drove her forth from power and wealth, to be
An exile and a pauper.

Meekly she
Surrender'd what she had so proudly worn,
Rome's purple. And, retiring from men's scorn
To Mitylene, lived there, lone and poor :
A careworn woman at a cottage door
Spinning for bread.

The world was sad to see
What it had done then. Men remorsefully
Remember'd not her many evils deeds,
But her few good ones. For who counts the weeds
In any garden, where, tho' desolate,
One rose remains ? And, much admiring fate
So bitter borne, so blameless of complaint,
The world, when speaking of her, said, "The
Saint !"

XII.

And after all these things, at the late end
Of a long life, she died.

XIII.

Then priests to send
Pilgrims to deck her tomb made haste. They
came
Bare-footed, chanting hymns unto her name,
And made a noise of praise above her bones,
Which waked her spirit in the grave.

XIV.

Old tones
Of some glad tune, first heard long years ago,
When to their music life went gladly too,

If heard once more when life, after long years,
 Goes not at all, but rests, in him that hears
 Awaken thus the wild unwonted spasm
 Of life's long buried old enthusiasm.
 Earth under earth, the earthly instinct, raised
 By earthly praises in the corpse thus praised,
 Return'd to life.

She rose i' the tomb, and said,
 "Open ! and let me forth. I am not dead.
 For men yet praise me, and their praises give
 My joy threat assurance that I live."
 And the tomb answer'd in its own dumb way,
 "I neither know the living, nor obey
 Their voice."

The pious pilgrims above ground,
 Their rites perform'd, departing now,—the sound
 Of human praise about that tomb wax'd faint,
 Then silent.

"Ah," she mused, "a saint? A saint
 Should seek not men, but God." She stood before
 The creviced hinge of the tomb's granite door,
 And struck it with dead hands, and said again,
 "Door of the tomb, since I have done with men,
 Show me the way to God."

The sullen door
 Answered, "I am the Door and the Tomb. No
 more
 Find thou the way."

xv.

Even then, an awful light,
 Not of this world, thro' chink and crevice bright
 With brightness as of burning fire that turns
 Whatever thing the burning of it burns

its sifted elemental worth :
ance to spirit, ashes unto earth)
e all the inner darkness where she stood.

XVI.

eby she saw, outstretch'd upon the rood
Image of the Christ (by Human Faith
d there in token of life's trust in death),
on her soul the sudden memory came
hope. . . . “ I am the Way ! ”

Who said the same

there i' the Tomb.

To whom she, kneeling, said,
ch me, O Christ (if I, indeed, be dead)
way. . . . Thou seest. . . . ”

A voice replied, “ To me,
an, give back mine eyes that I may see ! ”
lared not answer : dared not gaze upon
Face above.

XVII.

That moment's light was gone
as it came. Darkness return'd.

The rest,
n that darkness, never shall be guess'd.

R. LYTTON.

PASSAGES FROM PSYCHE : OR, AN OLD POET'S LOVE.

Ah ! that a light lifted hand
Should thus man's soul depress or raise,
And wield, as with a magic wand,
A spirit steeled in earlier days !

Ah ! that a voice whose speech is song,
Whose pathos weeps, whose gladness smiles,
Should meet a heart unmoved so long,
And charm it to the Syren Isles.

Ah ! that a presence, morn or eve,
Should fill deserted halls with light ;
One breeze-like step, departing, leave
The noon-day darker than the night !

Thy power is great ; but love and youth
Conspire with thee. With thee they dwell :
From those kind eyes with tenderest ruth,
On mine they look and say " Farewell ! "

Wert thou a child, O then the joy,
Thy hand in mine to roam the woods,
And teach the adventurous girl or boy
To scale the rocks, nor fear the floods !

What joy the page of ancient lore
To turn ; thy dawn of thought to watch :
And from thy kindling eyes once more
The sunrise of old times to catch !

Wert thou an infant, then my arms
Might lift thee in the light ; and I
The captive were of infant charms.
From such at least no need to fly.

Wert thou my sister, Love would swear
To own henceforth no haughtier name.
Whatever from that soul might wear,
The spell would be to me the same.

It is not love that rules my heart,
Nor aught by mortals named or known,
I know but this ; when near thou art,
I live : I die when thou art gone.

My Pysche laid her silken hand
Upon my silvering head,
And said, " To thee shall I remand
The light of seasons fled ? "

The child bent o'er me as she spake,
And leaning yet more near,
A kiss that kissed me for Love's sake,
Removed from me a tear.

Pysche, not so : lest life should grow
Near thee too deeply sweet.
And I, who censure death as slow,
Should fear her far-off feet.

Eternal sweetness, love, and truth,
 Are in thy face enshrined ;
 The breathing soul of endless youth
 On wafts thee like a wind.

Those eyes, where'er they chance to gaze,
 Might wake to songs the dumb !
 Breathe thou upon my blighted bays,—
 Rose-odoured they become.

Yet go, and cheer a happier throng,
 For death, a spouse dark-eyed,
 On me her eyes has levelled long,
 And calls me to her side.

O'er that not distant coast, even now,
 What shape ascends ? A tomb :
 Farewell my Pysche ; why shouldst thou
 Be shadowed by its gloom ?

She leaves us : many a gentler breast
 Will mourn our common loss like me :
 The babe her hands, her voice caressed ;
 The lamb that couched beside her knee.

Ah ! grief had but begun to grieve
 When thus I trifled with my sighs ;
 Who brings what Psyche brought must leave
 The loss no song can harmonize.

She brought me back the buried years,
 And glorious in her light they shone :
 Once more their sun is set, and tears
 Deface their care-worn aspects wan.

Old joys, old sorrows—ghosts unlaid—
In every dirge-like breeze go by ;
Loved phantoms haunt the unwholesome shade :
Ah, they revived them but to die !

Psyche trod once more her garden :
Softer bloom was o'er her thrown :
Richer seemed her smile, but graver :
On she moved—no more alone.

When now had come the marriage day,
The church was decked, and nigh the hour,
My Psyche said, “One other lay,
To bless the bride, and bless the bower !”

My Psyche's eyes in gladness swim ;
His gladness, doubled in her breast :
All that she is, and has, to him
She gives, not doubting, and is blest.

She walks on air, she lifts her brow
Like one inspired : such light as flushes
The Alps at morn, upon its snow
Is stayed, in glory, not in blushes.

Her world of dreams has ta'en its flight.
The shadow passed ; the substance came ;
A soul that long had fed on light
Love touched, and kindled into flame.

They met : twin powers together drawn :
Twin nurslings of the summer weather :
Twin eagles soaring through the dawn ;
Henceforth they soar and sink together.

Ah, heart of heart ! Ah, life of life !
 My Psyche to another given !
 The vow that changes maid to wife
 Is pledged to-day, and heard in heaven !.

And must she change ? And must that wing
 So buoyant, fail from out its sky ?
 Then fairest, purest, o'er thee fling
 The lightest robed mortality.

That joys which pass, like flowers may strew
 Thy path to blessings that remain ;
 And what they lack of deep and true,
 May be supplied by sacred pain.

But hark, the bridal bells ! and lo !
 In shadow now, and now in sun,
 With suave and swan-like movement slow,
 That white procession winding on !

Ah ! now her other life begins !
 The soft submission ! humble pride ;
 The smile tear-dripped ; the loss that wins ;
 The life transfused and multiplied.

Go, now, my Psyche ; meet the throngs
 That sprinkle flowers, and banners wave ;
 Take, Psyche, take my last of songs,
 And keep a garland for a grave.

AUBREY DE VERE.

HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD.

HOME they brought her warrior dead :
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry :
All her maidens, watching, said,
“ She must weep or she will die.”

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe ;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face ;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
“ Sweet my child, I live for thee.”

A. TENNYSON.

THE FISHERMAN.

FISHERMAN, speak to me, why so lonely,
Sailing away when the boats come home?
“ I have a little one—I must find him,—
Out where the sunlight kindles the foam.

“ Dying he talked to the wild green water,
Out of his window he watched the spray—
How should the daisies have power to keep him?
Somewhere the seagulls watch him at play.

“ Empty and cold is the shore without him,
Empty and dry must it ever be ;
Let me alone, for the sea consoles me,
Out in the waters he waits for me.

“ Empty and cold is the house without him,
Empty and dark through the open door ;
Will he not laugh when he hears me coming,
Coming to carry him home once more ?”

Bars of wet sunshine the boat sprang over,
Shaking her sails into sheets of gold ;
Back through the moonlight she drifted darkly,
Rocking at random, empty and cold.

M. B. SMEDLEY.

LIFE'S CROWN.

LIFE's fadeless crown is twisted from the leaves,
Of little flowers of love that show the lands
Around us, ready to all ready hands
To pluck and plait. And he who idly grieves
That life is crownless, is a fool, and blind.
He who would bless his fellows must not ask
Sublime occasions for that gentle task,
Or trumpets boasting to the deafened wind.
To fill with patience our allotted sphere,
To rule the self within us strong in faith,
To answer smile with smile, and tear with tear,
To perfect character and conquer death—
This is to him what angels call renown,
And bind round life's pale brows an amaranthine
crown.

WADE ROBINSON.

SONNET.

SAD is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet ;
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
In current unperceived, because so fleet ;
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing—
But tares, self-sown, have overtopped the wheat ;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing—
And still, oh still, their dying breath is sweet !
And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still ;
And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
A newer good to cure an older ill ;
And sweet are all things when we learn to prize
them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or
denies them.

A. DE VERE.

WARNINGS.

AGAINST her cheek a breath was playing ;
She felt it raise her hair ;
And then was shaped its gradual music
To one slow word,—“ Beware.”
A breeze it came, to haunt yet cheer,
Its sweetness robbed her heart of fear.

“ Beware—” because the sun shines brightly,
Because the flowers are fair.
Thus bright, thus gay, were bowers of Eden
While danced that fruit in air,
And waved o'er Eve's uplifted brow,
As life o'er thee is waving now.

A. DE VERE.

THE VIOLET.

Oh faint, delicious, spring-time violet,
Thine odour like a balm,
Thine noiselessness in memory's winds, no less
A thought of sorrow free.

The breath of discord hields upon my brow
Shows throughst that open door
The sound of wind-borne bells, more sweet and low
And sadder than of yore.

It comes like, from that beloved place,
And that beloved bairn,
When life hung ripening in love's golden grace
Like grapes blowre a bower.

A spring goes singing throught its ready grass
A lark sings o'er my head,
Drown'd in the sky—O pass, ye visions, pass,
I would that I were dead !

Why hast thou opened that forbidden door
From which I ever flee?
O vanished joy, O love that art no more,
Let my waked spirit be !

O violet ! thy odour through my brain
Hath searched, and stung to grief
This sunny day, as if a curse did stain
Thy velvet leaf.

W. STORY.

SAY WILT THOU THINK OF ME?

Say wilt thou think of me when I'm away,
Borne from the threshold and laid in the clay,
Past and forgotten for many a day ?

Wilt thou remember me when I am gone,
Further each year from thy vision withdrawn,
Thou in the sunset, and I in the dawn ?

Wilt thou remember me, when thou shalt see
Daily and nightly encompassing thee,
Hundreds of others, but nothing of me ? .

All that I ask is a gem in thine eye,
Sitting and thinking when no one is by,
Thus looked he on me—thus rung his reply.

Ah, but in vain is the boon that I seek :
Time is too strong, or remembrance too weak :
Soon yields to darkness the evening's last streak.

'Tis not to die, though the path be obscure :
Grand is the conflict, the victory sure ;
Vast though the peril, there's One can secure :

'Tis not to land on the region unknown,
Thronged by bright spirits, all strange and alone,
Waiting the doom from the Judge on the Throne.

But 'tis to feel the cold touch of decay,—
'Tis to look back on the wake of one's way,
Fading and vanishing day after day :

This is the bitterness none can be spared :
This, the oblivion the greatest have shared :
This, the true death for ambition prepared.

Thousands are round us, toiling as we,
Living and loving,—whose lot is to be
Past and forgotten, like waves on the sea.

Once in a life-time is uttered a word
That doth not vanish as soon as 'tis heard :
Once in an age is humanity stirred.

Once in a century springs forth a deed
From the dark bands of forgetfulness freed,
Destined to shine, and to help, and to lead :

Yet not e'en thus, escape we our lot :—
The deed lasts in memory, the doer is not :
The word liveth on, but the voice is forgot.

Who knows the forms of the mighty of old ?
Can bust or can portrait the spirit enfold,
Or the light of the eye by description be told ?

Nay, even He who our ransom became,
Bearing the Cross, and despising the shame,
Earning a Name above every name,—

They who had handled Him while He was here,
Kept they in memory His lineaments clear,—
Could they command them at will to appear ?

They who had heard Him, and lived on His voice,
Say, could they always recall at their choice
The tone and the cadence which made them rejoice?

Be we content then to pass into shade,
Visage and voice in oblivion laid,
And live in the light that our actions have made.

Yet do thou think of me, child of my soul:—
When the dark waves of forgetfulness roll,
Part may survive in the wreck of the whole.

Still let me count on the tear in thine eye,—
“Thus bent he o'er me, thus went his reply,”—
Sitting and thinking, when no one is by.

HENRY ALFORD.

THE ELVES.

I.

STRETCHING the tired limbs over the ground,
Laying the head o'er the elfin mound,
Seem'd I, or dream'd I, to hear and to see
Two milk-white maidens come lightly to me,
 So lightly to me?
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

II.

Two milk-white maidens : two little elf-girls :
One of them kist me under the curls :
One of them whisper'd me warm in the ear,
“ Up, and dance with us ! the moon shines clear
 On mountain and mere.”
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

III.

“ And look ! and my sisters shall glance the sweet
 glances :
And rise ! and my sisters shall dance the sweet
 dances :

And list ! and my sisters shall sing the sweet songs."
 And the elves of the forest came round me in
 throngs !

Around me in throngs !
 I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

IV.

And a marvellous music in air was heard,
 And voices neither of breeze nor bird :
 And the torrent that never before stood still,
 Stopp'd all at once of his own wild will,
 On the windy hill.

I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

V.

The torrent, that never before was at rest,
 Still'd every beat of his bubbling breast :
 And the little white delicate fishes all
 Danced, dimpling the diamond waterfall,
 That stood like a wall.
 I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

VI.

The little sly fishes with silvery tails
 Paddled and play'd ; and the nightingales,
 And all the sweet things that live in the air
 Sang aloud down the valleys, and everywhere
 Through the moonlight fair.
 I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
 Dreaming is o'er.

VII.

“And wilt thou be of us? and wilt thou be ours?
We will play thee strange music, and ply thee
strange powers;
Dance thee sweet dances, and sing thee sweet tunes,
And teach thee to read and to write the great
runes
That charm stars and moons.”
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

VIII.

“And that dreaming dragon, that sleepeth, roll'd
Fold over fold, on a heap of red gold,
Shall lift up the eyelid from over the eye,
And sleepily see thee, and seeing thee, fly
To the desert and die.”
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

IX.

Round the elfin ring did the music flow ;
And they dancèd high, and they dancèd low.
I watch'd them, drooping an eyelid bland,
But grasping the glaive in the wary hand,
Not trusting the band.
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

X.

And “Hearrest thou? fearest thou, fool, to feel
pleasure?
Delayest thou? weighst thou mirth with a measure?

We will give thee quick riddance : long rest from
all strife :
And cut off the cares that encumber thy life
With a sharp, sharp, knife."
I saw them but once : I shall see them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

XI.

If the cock had not crow'd at that moment so shrill,
And the red dawn flicker'd far off on the hill,
Which sent them all flitting, by tens and twelves,
I might have been there with them yet, and the
elves
Had my soul to themselves.
But I saw them once only, and saw them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

XII.

Thou that ridest by night over elfin ground,
Lay not the head on the elfin mound,
And let not the eyelid sink over the eye ;
For the elves are fair, and the elves are sly,
And a man might die.
Once only I saw them : I see them no more.
Dreaming is o'er.

R. LYTTON.

OLD MEMORIES.

As she walked through the lonely street,
Old memories breathed from each stone ;
She could hear the sound of *their* feet,
Although she was walking alone.

Some footsteps were short, and some long,
But all keeping pace with her own ;
And she heard the refrain of a song,
Yet still she was walking alone.

At the corner she made a stand,
And waited for half a minute ;
She could have almost sworn that a hand
Was holding hers tightly in it.

And she felt on her lips a kiss,
That was given her years agone ;
Then she murmured—"Ah ! why is this,
When I came through the street alone ?"

J. P. W.

HORTUS SICCUS.

ONE has some friendships, folded, put away,
Pressed into memory's leaves, like withered flow'r's,
Which, though we know their bloom hath all
departed,

We give more love to than we often say,
And still rejoice that we have called them ours,
And feel, because of them, the stronger-hearted.

And though we know one puff of healthy wind
Would soon reduce them to the dust they are,
One careless touch destroy their deadened beauty,
We only grow, because of that, more kind,
Avert more tenderly each threatened jar,
And count their cherishing a precious duty.

And when at eventide we are alone,
We bring them out, and live with them again,
And bygone fragrance seems to come upon them
The years all pass away which since have flown
A strange dull aching at the heart, like pain,
Reminds us how the sunbeams once fell on the

SAD

“SORROW AND SIGHING SHALL FLEE
AWAY.”

SORROW and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
How can it happen that these should pass
Out of a world where the flowers lie dying,
Out of a world where all flesh is grass?
Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
Dear as the autumn, and fair as the rain.

Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
Will they then cease, and our souls grow dull ?
Sluggishly somnolent, torpidly lying,
Lapped in the calm of a deep sea lull ?
Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,—
Should we not long for the thundering main ?

Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
All to be done, and our tears gone dry ;
Never a thought o'er the boundary flying,
Never a grasp as the clouds swing by.
Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
All faded out, nothing left to restrain.

Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
What would our days be cut off from these?
If, at the fairy mart, we were life buying,
Should we not choose them, past things that
please?
Sorrow and sighing, sorrow and sighing,
Take what you will, only leave us our pain.

SADIE.

SONG.

I WANDERED by the brook-side,
 I wandered by the mill,
I could not hear the brook flow,
 The noisy wheel was still ;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
 Nor chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree,
 I watch'd the long, long shade,
And as it grew still longer,
 I did not feel afraid ;
For I listen'd for a foot-fall,
 I listen'd for a word,
But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

He came not,—no, he came not ;
 The night came on alone,
The little stars sat one by one,
 Each on his golden throne ;
The evening air pass'd by my cheek,
 The leaves above were stirr'd,
But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When some one stood behind ;
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind :
It drew me nearer, nearer :
We did not speak a word,—
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

R. M. MILNES.

THE ROOT OF LOVE.

UNTO a goodly tree—
A rose-tree—in the garden of my heart,
Grew up my love for thee !

Truth for its spreading root,
That drew the sweetest virtue of the soil
Up to the freshest shoot.

My tree was richly clad ;
All generous thoughts and fancies burst the bud,
And every leaf was glad.

Then last of all, the flower,
The perfect flower of love, herself proclaimed
And ruled from hour to hour.

There came a thunder-rain,
But for each full-blown bloom it scattered down,
Fresh buds it opened twain.

There came a wind that rent
Both leaf and flower, and broke both branch and
stem ;
Only the root was left.

The root was left, and so
The living rose lay hidden till the time,
When the sweet south should blow.

ISA CRAIG.

GOOD NIGHT! GOOD NIGHT!

Good night ! good night !
Oh ! we never knew
How dear thou wert,
Till o'er our heart
The cold wind blew
That bade us part.
Good night ! good night !
Still stands thy eagle on his perch ;
Thy palfrey whinnies in her stall ;
Thy dog roams whining round the church ;
Thy page weeps in the darken'd hall !
For thou art in the churchyard mould,
The bright eye dimm'd, the kind heart cold.
Good night ! good night !
Yet the deeds thou hast done
Will outlast thy breath,
And the love thou hast won
Is with us till death :
Good night ! good night !
Oh ! a dearer presence never crost,
The path to which its life was given :
And a gentler spirit ne'er was lost
To earth, and gain'd to heaven :
Good night ! good night !

ANON.

DIVIDED.

AN empty sky, a world of heather,
Purple of foxglove, yellow of broom ;
We two among them wading together,
Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

Crowds of bees are giddy with clover,
Crowds of grasshoppers skip at our feet,
Crowds of larks at their matins hang over,
Thanking the Lord for a life so sweet.

Flusheth the rose with her purple favour,
Gloweth the cleft with her golden ring,
Twixt the two brown butterflies waver,
Lightly settle, and sleepily swing.

We two walk till the purple dieth,
And short dry grass under foot is brown,
But one little streak at a distance lieth,
Green like a ribbon to prank the down.

Over the grass we stepped unto it,
And God He knoweth how blythe we were !
Never a voice to bid us eschew it :
Hey the green ribbon that showed so fair !

Hey the green ribbon ! we kneeled beside it,
 We parted the grasses dewy and sheen ;
 Drop over drop there filtered and滑了
 A tiny bright beck that trickled between.

Tinkle, tinkle, sweetly it sung to us,
 Light was our talk as of faëry bells—
 Faëry wedding-bells faintly rung to us,
 Down in their fortunate parallels.

Hand in hand, while the sun peered over,
 We lapped the grass on that youngling spring ;
 Swept back its rushes, smoothed its clover,
 And said, " Let us follow it westering."

A dappled sky, a world of meadows,
 Circling above us the black thick rooks fly
 Forward, backward ; lo, their dark shadows
 Flit on the blossoming tapestry—

Flit on the beck, for her long grass parteth,
 As hair from a maid's bright eyes blown back ;
 And, lo, the sun like a lover darteth
 His flattering smile on her wayward track.

Sing on ! we sing in the glorious weather,
 Till one steps over the tiny strand,
 So narrow, in sooth, that still together
 On either brink we go hand in hand.

The beck grows wider, the hands must sever.
 On either margin, our songs all done,
 We move apart, while she singeth ever,
 Taking the course of the stooping sun.

He prays, "Come over"—I may not follow ;
I cry "Return"—but he cannot come :
We speak, we laugh, but with voices hollow ;
Our hands are hanging, our hearts are dumb.

A breathing sigh, a sigh for answer,
A little talking of outward things :
The careless beck is a merry dancer,
Keeping sweet time to the air she sings.

A little pain when the beck grows wider,
"Cross to me now—for her wavelets swell :"
"I may not cross"—and the voice beside her
Faintly reacheth, though heeded well.

No backward path ; ah ! no returning,
No second crossing that ripple's flow :
"Come to me now, for the west is burning,
Come ere it darkens,"—"Ah, no ! ah, no !"

Then cries of pain, and arms outreaching—
The beck grows wider and swift and deep :
Passionate words as of one beseeching—
The loud beck drowns them ; we walk, and weep.

A yellow moon in splendour drooping,
A tired queen with her state oppressed,
Low by rushes and swordgrass stooping,
Lies she soft on the waves at rest.

The desert heavens have felt her sadness ;
Her earth will weep her some dewy tears ;
The wild beck ends her tune of gladness,
And goeth stilly as soul that fears.

We two walk on in our grassy places
On either marge of the moonlit flood,
With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
Where joy is withered, blossom and bud.

A shady freshness, chafers whirring,
A little piping of leaf-hid birds ;
A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring,
A cloud to the eastward snowy as curds.

Bare grassy slopes, where kids are tethered ;
Round valleys like nests all ferny-lined ;
Round hills, with fluttering tree-tops feathered,
Swell high in their freckled robes behind.

A rose-flush tender, a thrill, a quiver,
When golden gleams to the tree-tops glide ;
A flashing edge for the milk-white river,
The beck, a river—with still sleek tide.

Broad and white, and polished as silver,
On she goes under fruit-laden trees ;
Sunk in leafage cooeth the culver,
And 'plaineth of love's disloyalties.

Glitters the dew and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell ;
But two are walking apart for ever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

A braver swell a swifter sliding ;
The river hasteth, her banks recede ;
Wing-like sails on her bosom gliding,
Bear down the lily and drown the reed.

Stately prows are rising and bowing
(Shouts of mariners winnow the air,)
And level sands for banks endowing,
The tiny green ribbon that shewed so fair.

While, O my heart ! as white sails shiver,
And crowds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow, with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far-off side !

Farther, farther—I see it—know it—
My eyes brim over, it melts away ;
Only my heart to my heart shall show it,
As I walk desolate day by day.

And yet I know past all doubting, truly—
A knowledge greater than grief can dim—
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly—
Yea, better—e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, “Thy breadth and thy depth for ever,
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me.”

JEAN INGELOW.

A CHILD ASLEEP.

How he sleepeth ! having drunken
Weary childhood's mandragore,
From his pretty eyes have sunken
Pleasures, to make room for more—
Sleeping near the withered nosegay, which he pulled
the day before.

Nosegays ! leave them for the waking !
Throw them earthward where they grew,
Dim are such, beside the breaking
Amaranths he looks unto—
Folded eyes see brighter colours than the open
ever do.

Heaven-flowers, rayed by shadows golden,
From the palms they sprang beneath,
Now perhaps divinely holden,
Swing against him in a wreath—
We may think so from the quickening of his bloom
and of his breath.

Vision unto vision calleth,
While the young child dreameth on,
Fair, O dreamer, thee befallenth
With the glory thou hast won !
Darker wert thou in the garden, yestermorn, by
summer sun.

We should see the spirits ringing
Round thee—were the clouds away !
'Tis the child-heart draws them, singing
In the silent-seeming clay,
Singing !—Stars that seem the mutest, go in music
all the way.

As the moths around a taper,
As the bees around a rose,
As in sunset many a vapour—
So the spirits group and close
Round about a holy childhood, as if drinking its
repose.

Shapes of brightness overlean thee,
With their diadems of youth,
Striking on thy ringlets sheeny—
Whilst thou smilest—not in sooth
Thy smile—but the overfair one, dropt from some
æthereal mouth.

Haply it is angels' duty,
During slumber, shade by shade
To fine down this childish beauty
To the thing it must be made,
Ere the world shall bring it praises, or the tomb
shall see it fade.

Softly, softly ! make no noises !
Now he lieth dead and dumb—
Now he hears the angels' voices
Folding silence in the room—
Now he muses deep the meaning of the heaven-
words as they come.

Speak not ! he is consecrated,
 Breathe no breath across his eyes.
Lifted up and separated,
 On the hand of God he lies,
In a sweetness beyond touching—held in cloistral
 sanctities.

Could ye bless him, father, mother ?
 Bless the dimple in his cheek ?
Dare ye look at one another,
 And the benediction speak ?
Would you not break out in weeping, and confess
 yourselves too weak ?

He is harmless—ye are sinful—
 Ye are troubled—he at ease !
From his slumber virtue winful
 Floweth outward with increase—
Dare not bless him ! but be blessed by his peace—
 and go in peace.

E. B. BROWNING.

LADY BARBARA.

EARL GAWAIN woo'd the Lady Barbara—
High-thoughted Barbara, so white and cold !
'Mong broad-branched beeches in the summer
shade,
In soft green light his passion he has told.
When rain-beat winds did shriek across the wold,
The Earl, to take her fair reluctant ear,
Framed passion-trembled ditties manifold ;
Silent she sat his am'rous breath to hear
With calm and steady eyes, her heart was other-
where.

He sigh'd for her through all the summer weeks,
Sitting beneath a tree, whose fruitful boughs
Bore glorious apples with smooth shining cheeks.
Earl Gawain came and whisper'd, "Lady, rouse !
Thou art no vestal held in holy vows,
Out with our falcons to the pleasant heath."
Her father's blood leapt up unto her brows.—
He, who exulting on the trumpet's breath,
Came charging like a star across the lists of death,

Trembled, and pass'd before her high rebuke.
And there she sat, her hands clasp'd round her
knee.
Like one far-thoughted was the lady's look,

For in a morning cold as misery
 She saw a lone ship sailing on the sea;
 Before the north 'twas driven like a cloud,
 High on the poop a man sat mournfully:
 The wind was whistling through mast and shroud,
 And to the whistling wind thus did he sing
 aloud:—

“Didst look last night upon my native vales,
 Thou sun, that from the drenching sea hast clomb?
 Ye demon winds! that glut my gaping sails,
 Upon the salt sea must I ever roam,
 Wander for ever on the barren foam?
 O happy are ye, resting mariners!
 O Death, that thou would'st come and take me
 home!
 A hand unseen this vessel onward steers,
 And onward I must float through slow moon-
 measured years.

“Ye winds! when like a curse ye drove us on,
 Frothing the waters, and along our way,
 Nor cape, nor headland, through red mornings
 shone.

One wept aloud, one shuddered down to pray,
 One howl'd, ‘Upon the deep we are astray!’
 In our wild hearts his words fell like a blight:
 In one short hour my hair was stricken grey,
 For all the crew sank ghastly in my sight
 As we went driving on through the cold starry
 night.

“Madness fell on me in my loneliness,
 The sea foam'd curses, and the reeling sky
 Became a dreadful face which did oppress
 Me with the weight of its unwinking eye.

It fled, when I burst forth into a cry—
A shoal of fiends came on me from the deep ;
I hid, but in all corners they did pry,
And dragg'd me forth, and round did dance and
leap ;
They mouth'd on me in dream, and tore me from
sweet sleep.

“Strange constellations burned above my head,
Strange birds around the vessel shriek'd and flew,
Strange shapes, like shadows, through the clear sea
fled
As one lone ship, wide wing'd, came rippling
through,
Angering to foam the smooth and sleeping blue.”
The lady sigh'd : “ Far, far upon the sea,
My own Sir Arthur, could I die with you !
The wind blows shrill between my love and me.”
Fond heart ! the space between was but the apple-
tree.

There was a cry of joy : with seeking hands
She fled to him, like worn bird to her nest ;
Like washing water on the figured sands,
His being came and went in sweet unrest,
As from the mighty shelter of his breast
The Lady Barbara her head uprears
With a wan smile, “ Methinks, I'm but half blest,
Now, when I've found thee, after weary years,
I cannot see thee love ! so blind I am with tears.”

ALEXANDER SMITH.

AT THE WINDOW.

ONLY to listen—listen, and wait
For his slow, firm step down the gravel walk ;
To hear the click-click of his hand on the gate,
And feel every heart-beat through careless talk ;
Ah ! love is sweet when life is young !
And life and love are both so long !

Only to watch him about the room,
Lighting it up with his quiet smile,
That seems to lift the world out of gloom,
And bring heaven nearer me—for awhile,
A little while—since love is young,
And life is beautiful as long.

Only to love him—nothing more ;
Never a thought of his loving me ;
Proud of him, glad in him, though he bore
My heart to shipwreck on this smooth sea.
Love's faith sees only grief, not wrong,
And life is daring when 'tis young.

Ah me ! what matter ? The world goes round,
And bliss and bale are but outside things :
I never can lose what in him I found,

Though love be sorrow with half-grown wings ;
And if love flies when we are young,
Why life is still not long—not long.

And heaven is kind to the faithful heart ;
And if we are patient, and brave, and calm,
Our fruits will last though our flowers depart :
Some day, when I sleep with folded palm,
No longer fair, no longer young,
Life may not seem so bitter long.

* * * * *

The tears dried up in her shining eyes,
Her parted lips look a saintly peace :—
His shadow across the doorway lies :—
Will her doubts gather, darken; or—cease ?—
When hearts are pure, and bold, and strong,
True love as life itself is long.

MISS MULOCHE.

SISTER HELEN.

“Why did you melt your waxen man,
Sister Helen?
To-day is the third day since you began!”
“The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother.”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven !*)

“But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You’ll let me play, for you said I might.”
“Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother.”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven !*)

“You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,
Sister Helen;
If now it is molten, all is well.”
“Even so. Nay, peace! you cannot tell,
Little brother.”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
O what is this, between Hell and Heaven ?*)

"Oh, the waxen knave was plump to-day,
Sister Helen;
How like dead folk he has dropped away!"
"Nay now, of the dead what can you say,
Little brother?"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
Sister Helen;
Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"
"Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,
Little brother?"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven !)*

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Here, high up in the balcony,
Sister Helen,
The moon flies face to face with me."
"Ay, look and say whatever you see,
Little brother."

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?*)

“ Outside it’s merry, in the wind’s wake,
Sister Helen ;
In the shaken trees the chill stars shake.”
“ Hush ! heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
Little brother ?”

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)*

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven?)*

“They come by the hill verge from Boyne Bar,
Sister Helen,
And one draws nigh, but two are afar.”
“Look, look, do you know them who they are,
Little brother?”

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm, rides so fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white mane on the blast."
"The hour has come, has come at last,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven !)*

“He has made a sign and called, Halloo!
Sister Helen,
And he says that he would speak with you.”
“Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,
Little brother.”

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Why laughs she thus between Hell and Heaven?)*

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,
Sister Helen,
That Keith of Ewern's like to die!"
"And he and thou, and thou and I,
Little brother."

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
And they and we, between Hell and Heaven !)*

"For three days now he has lain abed,
Sister Helen,
And he prays in torment to be dead!"
"The thing may chance, if he have prayed,
Little brother."

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven !)*

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,
Sister Helen,
That you should take your curse away."
"My prayer was heard—he need but pray,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?)*

" But he says till you take back your ban,
Sister Helen,
His soul would pass, yet never can."
" Nay then, shall I slay a living man,
Little brother ? "

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
A living soul, between Hell and Heaven !)*

"But he calls for ever on your name,
Sister Helen,
And says that he melts before a flame."
"My heart for his pleasure fared the same,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white plume on the blast,"
"The hour, the sweet hour, I forecast,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,
Sister Helen,
But his words are drowned in the wind's course ;"
"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforse,
Little brother."

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
A word ill heard, between Hell and Heaven !*)

“ Oh he says that Keith of Ewern’s cry,
Sister Helen,
Is ever to see you ere he die.”
“ He sees me in earth, and moon, and sky,
Little brother.”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Earth, moon, and sky, between Hell and Heaven!*)

“ He sends a ring and a broken coin,
Sister Helen,
And bids you mind the banks of Boyne.”
“ What else he broke will he ever join,
Little brother ? ”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Oh never more, between Hell and Heaven!*)

“ He yields you these, and craves full fain,
Sister Helen,
You pardon him in his mortal pain.”
“ What else he took will he give again,
Little brother ? ”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
No more, no more, between Hell and Heaven!*)

“ He calls your name in an agony,
Sister Helen,
That even dead love must weep to see.”
“ Hate, born of love, is blind as he,
Little brother ! ”

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!*)

**"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white hair on the blast."
"The short, short hour will soon be past,
Little brother!"**

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven !)*

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,
Sister Helen,
But oh ! his voice is sad and weak."
"What here should the mighty Baron seek,
Little brother ?"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh, his son still cries if you forgive,
Sister Helen,
The body dies, but the soul shall live?"
"Fire shall forgive me, as I forgive,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven !)*

"Oh, he prays you, as his heart would rive,
Sister Helen,
To save his dear son's soul alive."
"Nay, flame cannot slay it, it shall thrive,
Little brother."

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Alas! alas! between Hell and Heaven!)*

“He cries to you, kneeling in the road,
Sister Helen,
To go with him for the love of God.”
“The way is long to his son’s abode,
Little brother.”

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
The way is long between Hell and Heaven!)*

"O sister Helen, you heard the bell,
Sister Helen !
More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."
"No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,
Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven !*)

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,
Sister Helen,
Is it in the sky or in the ground?"
"Say, have they turned their horses round,
Little brother?"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What would she more, between Hell and Heaven?)*

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
The naked soul between Hell and Heaven !)*

"Oh, the wind is sad in the iron chill,
Sister Helen,
And weary, sad, they look by the hill."
"But Keith of Ewern's sadder still,
Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven !)*

" See, see, the wax hath dropped from its place,
Sister Helen,
And the flames are winning up apace !"
" Yet here they burn but for a space,
Little brother."

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Ah! what white thing at the door has cross'd,
Sister Helen,
Ah! what is't his that sighs in the frost?"
"A soul that's lost, as mine is lost,
Little brother."

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven !)*

D. G. ROSSETTI.

AN OLD SONG ENDED.

“How should I your true love know
From another one?”

“By his cockle-hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.”

“And what signs have told you now
That he hastens home?”

“Lo! the spring is nearly gone,
He is nearly come!”

“For a token is there naught,
Say, that he should bring?”

“He will wear a ring I gave,
And another ring?”

“How may I, when he shall ask,
Tell him who lies there?”

“Nay, but leave my face unveiled,
And unbound my hair.”

“Can you say to me some word,
I shall say to him?”

“Say I’m looking in his eyes,
Though my eyes are dim!”

D. G. ROSSETTI.

FROM "SONGS WITH PRELUDES."

WHEN I remember something which I had,
But which is gone, and I must do without,
I sometimes wonder how I can be glad,
Even in cowslip time when hedges sprout;
It makes me sigh to think on it—but yet
My days will not be better days should I forget.

When I remember something promised me,
But which I never had, nor can have now,
Because the promiser we no more see
In countries that accord with mortal vow;
When I remember this, I mourn,—but yet
My happier days are not the days when I forget.

JEAN INGELOW.

STRANGERS YET.

STRANGERS yet !
After years of life together,
After fair and stormy weather,
After travel in far lands,
After touch of wedded hands,—
Why thus joined—why ever met,
If they must be strangers yet ?

Strangers yet !
After childhood's winning ways,
After care, and blame, and praise,
Counsel asked and wisdom given,
After mutual prayers to heaven,
Child and parent scarce regret
When they part—are strangers yet.

Strangers yet !
After strife for common ends,
After title of “old friends,”
After passions fierce and tender,
After cheerful self-surrender,
Hearts may beat, and eyes be met,
And the souls be strangers yet.

Strangers yet !
Oh ! the bitter thought to scan,
All the loneliness of man :—
Nature by magnetic laws,
Circle unto circle draws,
But they only touch when met,
Never mingle—strangers yet.

Strangers yet !
Will it evermore be thus—
Spirits still impervious ?
Shall we never fairly stand
Soul to soul as hand to hand ?
Are the bounds eternal set
To retain us—strangers yet ?

Strangers yet !
Tell not love it must aspire
Unto something other—higher :
God Himself were loved the best
Were our sympathies at rest,
Rest above the strain and fret
Of the world of—strangers yet !
Strangers yet !

R. M. MILNES.

HALF TRUTH.

THE words that trembled on your lips
Were uttered not—I know it well ;
The tears that would your eyes eclipse,
Were checked and smothered, ere they fell :
The looks and smiles I gained from you
Were little more than others won ;
And yet you are not wholly true,
Nor wholly just what you have done.

You know, at least you might have known,
That every little grace you gave,—
Your voice's somewhat lowered tone,—
Your hand's faint shake or parting wave,—
Your every sympathetic look,
At words that chanced your soul to touch,
While reading from some favourite book,
Were much to me—alas, how much !

You might have seen—perhaps you saw—
How all of these were steps of hope
On which I rose, in joy and awe,
Up to my passion's lofty scope ;
How after each a firmer tread
I planted on the slippery ground,
And higher raised my venturous head,
And ever new assurance found.

Maybe without a further thought,
It only pleased you thus to please,
And thus to kindly feelings wrought,
You measured not the sweet degrees ;
Yet though you hardly understood,
Where I was following at your call,
You might—I dare to say you should—
Have thought how far I had to fall.

And thus when fallen, faint, and bruised,
I see another's glad success,
I may have wrongfully accused
Your heart of vulgar fickleness :
But even now, in calm review
Of all I lost, and all I won,
I cannot deem you wholly true,
Nor wholly just what you have done.

R. M. MILNES.

HEARTS GOOD AND TRUE.

HEARTS good and true
Have wishes few,
In narrow circles bounded ;
And he who lives
On what God gives,
Hath Christian hope well-founded.

Small things are best,
Grief and unrest
With rank and wealth are given ;
But little things,
On little wings,
Bear little souls to heaven.

FABER.

BEGINNINGS.

Who can tell when it first begun?
At the archery fête, or the Albert Hall?
Lady Mary's dance, or the County Ball?
But to be, it must have begun.

Does any one think he knows?
Then perhaps he will also define
The delicate border line
Whence night into morning grows.

Or the very moment tell
When the sap beneath the rind,
Begins its strength to find,
And the tiny buds to swell.

Or on the slender spray,
'Mid the leaf's unfolding grace
The coming rosebud trace,
And declare it was form'd to-day.

Ah! nature has delicate hands,
She works not by hammer and steam,
Her process a beautiful dream,
Which the dreamer alone understands.

And the thoughts the heart cherishes most
Are those that the deepest lie—
When survey'd with too critical eye
The halo that crown'd them is lost.

The gold that's exposed to the air
And the touch, grows tarnish'd and dull :
And the flowers soon fade that we cull,
Though it be for a bride to wear.

But the heart's gold glitters unseen,
And the heart's forget-me-not
Has ever a hidden spot
Which the sacred springs keep green.

Then let not the world's gaze profane
On the heart's emotions intrude,
Keep holy the solitude
That broods o'er the sprouting grain.

If it be God's will, it will grow,
With the changing, growing year,
From the blade to the ripening ear—
But the process' none may know.

W. PARKINSON.

THE FLOWER MESSAGE.

THEY said he was craz'd with grief,
And I think it might be so,
And in this pastime sought relief
Of his unspoken woe.

For in the cloven land
Leaves from the rose fresh shed
He placed with deferential hand,
Sweet letters to the dead.

For he had seen her laid
Low in earth's silent breast,
Beyond the reach of words—the maid
He lov'd, in dreamless rest.

And it may be the thought,
The faded blooms might bear
His love to her he lov'd, was fraught
With spells that lull'd despair.

Thus every summer eve
His heart with hopes he fed
That his love-tokens would receive
An answer from the dead.

And when the flowers no more
Bloom'd to supply his need,
Still constant to the place he bore
Cells with their ripening seed.

Thus pass'd the days till rain
Fell, and the damp and cold
Sealed up the pores on all the plain,
Melting the soften'd mould.

The fields and trees were sere,
The leaves and flowers were fled,
A dull mist veil'd the dying year,
And hope itself seem'd dead.

But Nature's annual grief
Melts with the snows away,
And with the Spring's soft breath relief
Comes, and a dream of May.

Then warmth and life begin
To wake, to move, to thrill,
Unseen, Earth's torpid heart within,
Like a half-conscious will ;

A will, that soon asserts
Itself, and gathering power
Works by sure process, and converts
The seed into the flower.

And thus it chanc'd one morn
That smelt and breathed of Spring,
He loiter'd by the spot forlorn,
Not hoping anything.

When, lo ! his languid eye
Flash'd with a sudden flame,
His pulses stopp'd, and a great cry
From his heart quivering came.

For there—was it a flower ?
Or was it Heaven's own blue,
Shed by the balmy vernal shower
And sphered in tender dew ?

Ah ! far away his thought
From dews or flowers had fled,
At length had come, long vainly sought,
The message from the dead !

They marvell'd that he lay
So long upon the ground,
And knew not that his life that day
Had its completeness found.

They bore him gently home,—
The flower clasp'd to his breast—
Sweet message from the silent tomb—
Herald of peace and rest.

W. PARKINSON.

COULD I RECALL THE YEARS THAT NOW ARE FLOWN.

COULD I recall the years that now are flown

For evermore :

Revive my early visions—long o'erthrown—

And hope restore:

How blest it were to mould my life anew,
And all my broken vows of youth renew !

Oh, were I once again but free to choose

As in past days,

How oft the sun-lit path I would refuse

For sterner ways !

Content to turn aside from every road,
Save that which kept me in the smile of God.

But vain the dream : the strife is o'er with me,
Dark days remain ;

I could not trust my heart if I were free
To choose again ;

The dazzling morning might again deceive,
Life be mis-spent, and age be left to grieve.

I would not, if I could, recall the years
That now are fled ;

Their cares and pleasures, labours, hopes, and fears
For me are dead ;

I ask but mercy for the weary past,
And grace to guide me gently home at last.

REV. JOHN MACLEOD.

H H

THE WORTH OF HOURS.

BELIEVE not that your inner eye
Can ever in just measure try
The worth of hours as they go by.

For every man's weak self, alas !
Makes him to see them, while they pass,
As through a dim or tinted glass.

But if in earnest care you would
Mete out to each its part of good,
Trust rather to your after-mood.

Those surely are not fairly spent,
That leave your spirit bowed and bent
In sad unrest and ill-content :

And more—though free from seeming harm
You rest from toil of mind or arm,
Or slow retire from pleasure's charm,—

For then a painful sense comes on
Of something wholly lost and gone,
Vainly enjoyed, or vainly done ;

Of something from your being's chain
Broke off, not to be linked again
By all mere memory can retain,—

Upon your heart this truth may rise,—
Nothing that altogether dies,
Suffices man's just destinies :

So should we live, that every hour
May die, as dies the natural flower,
A self-reviving thing of power ;

That every thought and every deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future need.

Esteeming sorrow, whose employ
Is to develop not destroy,
Far better than a barren joy.

R. M. MILNES.

THE DRAP O' DEW.

CONFIDE ye aye in Providence,
For Providence is kind ;
And bear ye a' life's changes,
Wi' a calm and tranquil mind ;
Though pressed and hemmed on every *side*,
Hae faith and ye'll win through,
For ilk blade o' grass
Keeps its ain "drap o' dew."

In lang, lang days o' summer,
When the clear and cloudless sky
Refuses a wee drap o' rain
To nature parched and dry,
The genial night, with radiant breath,
Makes verdure spring anew,
For ilk blade o' grass
Keeps its ain "drap o' dew."

When rest trae triens, or cross'd in love,
As whiles nae doubt you've been,
Grief lies deep hidden in the heart,
Or tears rin down the e'en,
Believe it's for the best, and trow
There's guide in store for you,
For ilk blade o' grass.
Keeps its ain "drap o' dew."

And lest, 'mid fortune's sunshine,
We should look too proud an' high,
And in our pride forget to wipe
The tear frae ither's eye,
Some wee, wee clouds of sorrow come,
We ken na where or hoo ;
For ilka blade o' grass
Ke'ps its ain "dрап o' dew."

J. BALLANTYNE.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
For always roaming with a hungry heart—
Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me

Little remains : but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this grey spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port : the vessel puffs her sail :
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old Age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the
deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite

The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we
are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

A. TENNYSON.

FROM "SONGS WITH PRELUDES."

"PRESERVE to me my wealth," I do not say,
 For that is wasted away;
And much of it was cankered 'ere it went.
"Preserve to me my health," I cannot say,
 For that, upon a day,
Went after other delights to banishment.

What can I pray? "Give me forgetfulness?"
 No, I would still possess
Past away smiles, though present fronts be stern.
"Give me again my kindred?" nay: not so,
 Not idle prayers. We know
They that have crossed the river cannot return.

I do not pray, "Comfort me! Comfort me!"
 For how should comfort be?
O,—O! that cooing mouth—that little white head!
No; but I pray, "If it be not too late,
 Open to me the gate,
That I may find my babe when I am dead.

"Show me the path. I had forgotten Thee
 When I was happy and free,
Walking down here in the gladsome light o' the
 sun;
But now I come and mourn: O set my feet
 In the road to Thy blest seat,
And for the rest, O God, thy will be done."

JEAN INGELOW.

CARPE DIEM.

YOUTH, that pursuest with such eager pace
Thy even way,
Thou pantest on to win a mournful race :
Then stay ! oh stay !

Pause and luxuriate in thy sunny plain ;
Loiter,—enjoy ;
Once past, Thou never wilt come back again,
A second boy.

The hills of manhood wear a noble face,
When seen from far ;
The mist of light from which they take their grace
Hides what they are.

The dark and weary path those cliffs between
Thou canst not know,
And how it leads to regions never green,
Dead fields of snow.

Pause, while thou mayst, nor deem that fate thy
gain,
Which, all too fast,
Will drive thee forth from this delicious plain,
A man at last.

R. M. MILNES.

THE LORELEY.

AFTER HEINE.

I CANNA tell what has come ower me
That I am sae eerie and wae ;
An auld-world tale comes before me,
It haunts me by nicht and by day.

From the cool lift the gloamin' draps dimmer,
And the Rhine slips saftly by ;
The taps o' the mountains shimmer
I' the lowe o' the sunset sky.

Up there, in a glamour entrancin',
Sits a maiden wondrous fair ;
Her gowden adornments are glancin',
She is kaimin' her gowden hair.

As she kaims it the gowd kaim glistens,
The while she is singin' a song
That hauds the rapt soul that listens,
With its melody sweet and strong.

The boy, floating by in vague wonder,
Is seiz'd wi' a wild weird love ;
He sees na' the black rocks under,—
He sees but the vision above.

The waters their waves are flinging
Ower boatie and boatman anon ;
And this wi' her airtfu' singin',
The water-witch, Lurley, has done.

ANON.

THE BOY AND THE RING.

FAIR chance held fast is merit. A certain king
Of Persia had a jewel in a ring,
He set it on the dome of Ayud high ;
And, when they saw it flashing in the sky,
Made proclamation to his royal troop,
That whoso sent an arrow thro' the hoop
That held the gem, should have the ring to wear.

It chanced, there were four hundred archers near,
Of the king's company, about the king.
Each took his aim, and shot, and miss'd the ring.

A boy at play upon the terraced roof
Of a near building, bent his bow aloof
At random, and behold ! the morning breeze
His little arrow caught, and bore with ease
Right thro' the circlet of the gem. The king,
Well-pleased, unto the boy assign'd the ring.

Then the boy burnt his arrows and the bow.
The king, astonish'd, said, " Why dost thou so,
Seeing thy first shot hath had great success ? "
He answer'd, " Lest my second make that less."

R. LYTTON.

THE EYES OF MAHMUD.

SULTAN MAHMUD, son of Sabaktogin,
Swept with his sceptre the hot sands of Zin,
Spread forth his mantle over Palestine,
And made the carpet of his glory shine,
From Cufah to Cashmere ; and, in his pride,
Said, " All these lands are mine."

At last he died.

Then his sons laid him with exceeding state
In a deep tomb. Upon the granite gate,
Outside they graved in gold, his titles all,
And all the names of kingdoms in his thrall,
And all his glory. And beside his head
They placed a bag of rice, a loaf of bread,
And water in a pitcher. This they did
In order that, if God should haply bid
His servant Death to let this Sultan go,
Because of his surpassing greatness, so
He might not come back hungry. But he lay
In his high marble coffin night and day
Motionless, without majesty or will.
Darkness sat down beside him, and was still.
Afterwards, when a hundred years had roll'd,
A certain king, desiring to behold
This famous sultan, gave command to unlock
The granite gate of that sepulchral rock,

And with a lamp, went down into the tomb,
And all his court.

Out of the nether gloom
There rose a loathsome stench intolerable.
Hard by the marble coffin, on a sill
Of mildew'd stone, the earthen pitcher stood,
Untouch'd, untasted. Rats, a ravenous brood,
Had scatter'd all the rice, and gnawed the bread.
All that was left upon his marble bed
Of the great Sultan, was a little heap
Of yellow bones, and a dry skull, with deep
Eye-sockets. But in those eye-sockets, lo !
Two living eyes were rolling to and fro,
Now left, now right, with never any rest.
Then was the king amazed, and smote his breast,
And call'd on God for grace. But not the less,
Those dismal eyes, with dreadful restlessness
Continually in their socket-holes,
Roll'd right and left, like pain'd and wicked souls.
Then said the king, " Call here an Abid, wise
And righteous, to rebuke those wicked eyes
That will not rest."

And when the Abid came,
The king said, " O mine Abid, in the name
Of the High God that judges quick and dead,
Speak to those eyes."

The Abid, trembling, said,
" Eyes of Mahmud, why is your rest denied
In death ? What seek ye here ?"

The eyes replied,
Still rolling in their wither'd sockets there,
" God's curse upon this darkness ! where, O where
Be my possessions ? For with fierce endeavour
Ever we seek them, but can find them never."

R. LYTTON.

CLARA AND I.

We have a joke whenever we meet,
Clara and I ;
Prattle, and laughter, and kisses sweet,
Clara and I.

Were I but twenty, and not twoscore,
Clara and I would laugh still more,
With plenty of hopeful years in store
For Clara and I.

We will be true as Damascus steel,
Clara and I,
Sealing our truth with a honied seal,
Clara and I.
Eyes so loving, lips of rose,
Cheeks where the dainty ripe peach grows,
And mouth where the sly God smiles jocose
At Clara and I.

We have a kiss whenever we part,
Clara and I ;
Were she but twenty, and not sixteen,
Over my love she'd reign the queen,
And no fair rival should come between
My Clara and I.

ANON.

SECTION V.

POEMS MAINLY DESCRIPTIVE.



THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the
sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strewn.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the
blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and
chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever
grew still !

Together blending,
And soon descending,
The narrow sweep,
Of the hill-side steep,
They wind aslant
Toward Saint Amant,
Through leafy alleys
Of verdurous valleys,
With merry sallies
Singing their chant.

“The roads should blossom, the roads should bloom,
So fair a bride shall leave her home !
Should blossom and bloom with garlands gay,
So fair a bride shall pass to-day !”

It is Baptiste, and his affianced maiden,
With garlands for the bridal laden !

The sky was blue, without one cloud of gloom,
The sun of March was shining brightly,
And to the air the freshening wind gave lightly
Its breathings of perfume.

When one beholds the dusky hedges blossom,
A rustic bridal, ah ! how sweet it is !
To sounds of joyous melodies,
That touch with tenderness the trembling bosom.

A band of maidens
Gaily frolicking,
A band of youngsters
Wildly rollicking !
Kissing,
Caressing,
With fingers pressing,

Till in the veriest
Madness of mirth as they dance,
They retreat and advance,
Trying whose laugh shall be loudest and merriest ;
While the bride, with roguish eyes,
Sporting with them now escapes and cries,
“ Those who catch me,
Married verily,
This year shall be ! ”

And all pursue with eager haste,
And all attain what they pursue,
And touch her pretty apron fresh and new,
And the linen kirtle round her waist.

Meanwhile, whence comes it that among
These youthful maidens fresh and fair,
So joyous, with such laughing air,
Baptiste stands sighing, with silent tongue ?
And yet the bride is fair and young !
Is it Saint Joseph would say to us all,
That love, o'er hasty, precedeth a fall ?
O, no, for a maiden frail, I trow,
Never bore so lofty a brow !
What lovers ! they give not a single caress !
To see them so careless and cold to-day,
These are grand people, one would say.
What ails Baptiste ? what grief doth him oppress ?
It is, that, half way up the hill,
In yon cottage, by whose walls
Stand the cart-house and the stalls,
Dwelleth the blind orphan still,
Daughter of a veteran old ;
And you must know, one year ago,

That Margaret, the young and tender,
 Was the village pride and splendour,
 And Baptiste, her lover bold.
 Love, the deceiver, them ensnared ;
 For them the altar was prepared ;
 But alas ! the summer's blight,
 The dread disease that none can stay,
 The pestilence that walks by night,
 Took the young bride's sight away.

All at the father's stern command was changed ;
 Their peace was gone, but not their love estranged.
 Wearied at home, ere long the lover fled ;
 Returned but three short days ago,
 The golden chain they round him throw,
 He is enticed, and onward led
 To marry Angela, and yet
 Is thinking ever of Margaret.

Then suddenly a maiden cried,
 " Anna, Theresa, Mary, Kate !
 Here comes the cripple, Jane !" and by a fountain's
 side,
 A woman, bent and grey with years,
 Under the mulberry tree appears,
 And all towards her run, as fleet
 As had they wings upon their feet.
 It is that Jane, the cripple Jane,
 Is a soothsayer, wary and kind.
 She telleth fortunes, and none complain.
 She promises one a village swain,
 Another a happy wedding day,
 And the bride a lovely boy straightway.
 All comes to pass as she avers ;
 She never deceives, she never errs.

But for this once the village seer
Wears a countenance severe,
And from beneath her eyebrows thin and white
Her two eyes flash like cannons bright
Aimed at the bridegroom in waistcoat blue,
Who, like a statue, stands in view ;
Changing colour, as well he might,
When the beldame wrinkled and grey
Takes the young bride by the hand,
And, with the tip of her ready wand
Making the sign of the cross, doth say :
“ Thoughtless Angela, beware !
Lest, when thou weddest this false bridegroom,
Thou diggest for thyself a tomb !”

And she was silent ; and the maidens fair
Saw from each eye escape a swollen tear ;
But on a little streamlet silver clear,
What are two drops of turbid rain ?
Saddened a moment, the bridal train
Resumed the dance and song again :
The bridegroom only was pale with fear ;—
And down green alleys
Of verdurous valleys,
With merry sallies,
They sang the refrain :—

“ The roads should blossom, the roads should bloom,
So fair a bride shall leave her home !
Should blossom and bloom with garlands gay,
So fair a bride shall pass to-day !”

II.

And by suffering worn and weary,
But beautiful as some fair angel yet,

Thus lamented Margaret,
In her cottage lone and dreary :—

“ He has arrived ! arrived at last !
Yet Jane has named him not these three days past ;
Arrived ! yet keeps aloof so far !
And knows that of my night he is the star !
Knows that long months I wait alone, benighted,
And count the moments since he went away !
Come ! keep the promise of that happier day,
That I may keep the faith to thee I plighted !
What joy have I without thee ? what delight ?
Grief wastes my life, and makes it misery ;
Day for the others ever, but for me
For ever night ! for ever night !
When he is gone 'tis dark ! my soul is sad !
I suffer ! O my God ! come, make me glad.
When he is near, no thoughts of day intrude
Day has blue heavens, but Baptiste has blue eyes !
Within them shines for me a heaven of love,
A heaven all happiness, like that above,
No more of grief ! no more of lassitude !
Earth I forget, and heaven, and all distresses,
When seated by my side my hand he presses ;
But when alone, remember all !
Where is Baptiste ! he hears not when I call !
A branch of ivy, dying on the ground,
I need some bough to twine around !
In pity come ! be to my suffering kind !
'True love, they say, in grief doth more abound !
What then, when one is blind ?
“ Who knows ? perhaps I am forsaken !
Ah ! woe is me ! then bear me to my grave !
O God ! what thoughts within me waken !
Away ! he will return ! I do but rave !

He will return ! I need not fear !
He swore it by our Saviour dear !
He could not come at his own will ;
Is weary, or perhaps is ill !
Perhaps his heart, in this disguise,
Prepares for me some sweet surprise !
But some one comes ! though blind, my heart can
see !
And that deceives me not ! 'tis he ! 'tis he !"
And the door ajar is set,
And poor, confiding Margaret
Rises, with outstretched arms, but sightless eyes.
'Tis only Paul, her brother, who thus cries :—
" Angela the bride has passed !
I saw the wedding guests go by ;
Tell me, my sister, why were we not asked ?
For all are there but you and I !"

" Angela married ! and not send
To tell her secret unto me !
O speak ! who may the bridegroom be ?"
" My sister, 'tis Baptiste, thy friend !"

A cry the blind girl gave, but nothing said ;
A milky whiteness spreads upon her cheeks ;
An icy hand, as heavy as lead,
Descending as her brother speaks,
Upon her heart, that has ceased to beat,
Suspends awhile its life and heat,
She stands beside the boy, now sore distressed,
A wax Madonna as a peasant dressed.

At length the bridal song again
Brings her back to her sorrow and pain,

“ Hark ! the joyous airs are ringing !
 Sister, dost thou hear them singing ?
 How merrily they laugh and jest !
 Would we were bidden with the rest.
 I would don my hose of homespun grey ;
 And my doublet of linen striped and gay ;
 Perhaps they will come, for they do not wed
 Till to-morrow at seven o’clock, it is said !”

“ I know it ! ” answered Margaret,
 Whom the vision with aspect black as jet,
 Mastered again ; and its hand of ice
 Held her heart crushed as in a vice !
 “ Paul, be not sad ! ‘tis a holiday ;
 To-morrow put on thy doublet gay !
 But leave me now for awhile alone.”
 Away, with a hop and a jump went Paul,
 And, as he whistled along the hall,
 Entered Jane, the crippled crone !

“ Holy Virgin ! what dreadful heat !
 I am faint, and weary, and out of breath !
 But thou art cold,—art chill as death ;
 My little friend ! what ails thee, sweet ?”
 “ Nothing ! I hear them singing home the bride,
 And, as I listened to the song,
 I thought my time would come ere long ;
 Thou knowest it is at Whitsuntide,
 Thy cards forsooth can never lie,
 To me such joy they prophesy,
 Thy skill shall be vaunted far and wide
 When they behold him at my side,
 And poor Baptiste, what savest thou ?
 It must seem long to him : methinks I see him now !”
 Jane, shuddering, her hand doth press :
 “ Thy love I cannot all approve ;

We must not trust too much to happiness ;
Go, pray to God, that thou may'st love him less !"

"The more I pray, the more I love !
It is no sin, for God is on my side !"
It was enough, and Jane no more replied.

Now to all hope her heart is barred and cold ;
But to deceive the beldame old,
She takes a sweet, contented air,
Speaks of foul weather, or of fair,
At every word the maiden smiles !
Thus the beguiler she beguiles.

So that, departing at the evening's close,
She says, "She may be saved ! she nothing knows !"
Poor Jane, the cunning sorceress !
Now that thou would'st thou art no prophetess !
This morning, in the fulness of thy heart,
Thou wast so, far beyond thine art !

III.

Now rings the bell, nine times reverberating,
And the white daybreak, stealing up the sky,
Sees in two cottages two maidens waiting,
How differently !

Queen of a day, by flatterers caressed,
The one puts on her cross and crown,
Decks with a huge bouquet her breast,
And flaunting, fluttering up and down,
Looks at herself and cannot rest.

The other, blind, within her little room,
Has neither crown nor flowers' perfume ;

But in their stead for something gropes apart
That in a drawer's recess doth lie,
And 'neath her bodice of bright scarlet dye,
Convulsive clasps it to her heart.

The one fantastic, light as air,
'Mid kisses ringing,
And joyous singing,
Forgets to say her morning prayer !
The other, with cold drops upon her brow,
Joins her two hands, and kneels upon the floor,
And whispers, as her brother opes the door,
“ O God ! forgive me now ! ”

And then the orphan, young and blind,
Conducted by her brother's hand,
Towards the church, through paths unscanned,
With tranquil air, her way doth wind.

Odours of laurel, making her faint and pale,
Round her at times exhale,
And in the sky as yet no sunny ray,
But brumal vapours grey.

Near that castle fair to see,
Crowded with sculptures old, in every part,
Marvels of nature and of art,
And proud of its name of high degree,
A little chapel, almost bare,
At the base of the rock is builded there ;
All glorious that it lifts aloof,
Above each jealous cottage roof,
Its sacred summit swept by autumn gales,
And its blackened steeple high in air,
Round which the osprey screams and sails.

"Paul, lay thy noisy rattle by!"
Thus Margaret said. "Where are we? we
ascend!"

"Yes: seest thou not our journey's end?
Hearest not the osprey from the belfry cry?
The hideous bird that brings ill luck we know!
Dost thou remember when our father said,

The night we watched beside his bed,
'O daughter, I am weak and low;
Take care of Paul; I feel that I am dying!'
And thou, and he, and I, all fell to crying?
Then on the roof the osprey screamed aloud;
And here they brought our father in his shroud.
There is his grave; there stands the cross we set;
Why dost thou clasp me so, dear Margaret?

Come in! the bride will be here soon:
Thou tremblest! O alas! thou art going to
swoon!"

She could no more, the blind girl, weak and
weary!

A voice seemed crying from that grave so dreary,
"What wouldst thou do, my daughter?" and she
started;

And quick recoiled, aghast, faint-hearted;
But Paul, impatient, urges evermore
Her steps towards the open door;
And when, beneath her feet, the unhappy maid
Crushes the laurel near the house immortal,
And with her head, as Paul talks on again,

Touches the crown of filigrane
Suspended from the low arched portal,
No more restrained, no more afraid,
She walks, as for a feast arrayed;
And in the ancient chapel's sombre night
They both are lost to sight.

At length the bell,
 With booming sound,
 Sends forth, resounding round,
 Its hymeneal peal o'er rock and down the dell;
 It is broad day, with sunshine and with rain,
 And yet the guests delay not long,
 For soon arrives the brilliant train,
 And with it brings the village throng.

In sooth, deceit maketh no mortal gay,
 For lo ! Baptiste on his triumphant day,
 Mute as an idiot, sad as yester-morning,
 Thinks only of the beldame's words of warning.

And Angela thinks of her cross, I wis
 To be a bride is all ! The pretty lisper
 Feels her heart swell to hear all around her
 whisper,
 " How beautiful ! how beautiful she is ! "

But she must calm that giddy head,
 For already the mass is said ;
 At the holy table stands the priest ;
 The wedding ring is blessed, Baptiste receives it ;
 Ere on the finger of the bride he leaves it,
 He must pronounce one word at least !
 'Tis spoken ; and sudden at the groomsmen's
 side,
 " 'Tis he ! " a well-known voice has cried.
 And while the wedding guests all hold their
 breath,
 Opes the confessional, and the blind girl see !
 " Baptiste," she said, " since thou hast wished
 my death,
 As holy water, be my blood for thee ! "

And calmly in the air, a knife suspended !
Doubtless her guardian angel near attended,
For anguish did its work so well,
'That ere the fatal stroke descended,
Lifeless she fell !

At eve, instead of bridal verse,
The " De Profundis " filled the air ;
Decked with flowers, a single hearse,
To the churchyard, forth they bear ;
Village girls in robes of snow,
Follow, weeping as they go.
Nowhere was a smile that day,
No, ah no ! for each one seemed to say :—

" The roads shall mourn, and be veiled in gloom,
So fair a corpse shall have its home !
Should mourn, and should weep, ah ! well-away !
So fair a corpse shall pass to-day."

Translated by LONGFELLOW.

Jasmin, the author of this beautiful poem, is to the South of France, what Burns is to the South of Scotland—the representative of the heart of the people.—He still lives at Agen, on the Garonne ; and long may he live there, to delight his native land with native songs.

THE DEATH-BED.

WE watched her breathing through the night,
 Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
 Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
 So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers,
 To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
 Our tears our hopes belied ;
We thought her dying when she slept,
 And sleeping when she died.

For when the moon came dim and sad,
 And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
 Another morn than ours.

T. HOOD.

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE

(1571).

THE old mayor climbed the belfry-tower,
The ringers ran by two, by three ;
“ Pull, if ye never pulled before,
Good ringers, pull your best,” quoth he.
“ Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells !
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
Play uppe ‘ The Brides of Enderby.’ ”

Men say it was a stolen tyde—
The Lord that sent it, He knows all ;
But in myne ears doth still abide
The message that the bells let fall.
And there was nougat of strange, beside
The flights of mews and peewits pied,
By millions crouched on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the doore,
My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes ;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
Lay sinking in the barren skies ;
And dark against day’s golden death,
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne’s faire wife, Elizabeth.

“Cusha ! Cusha ! Cusha !” calling,
 Ere the early dews were falling,
 Farre away I heard her song.
 “Cusha ! Cusha !” all along ;
 Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
 Floweth, floweth,
 From the meads where melick growtheth
 Faintly came her milking song—

“Cusha ! Cusha ! Cusha !” calling,
 “For the dews will soone be falling ;
 Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
 Mellow, mellow ;
 Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow ;
 Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
 Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
 Hollow, hollow ;
 Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
 From the clovers lift your head ;
 Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
 Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
 Jetty, to the milking-shed.”

If it be long, ay, long ago,
 When I beginne to think howe long,
 Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
 Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong ;
 And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
 Bin full of floating bells (sayth she),
 That ring the tune of Enderby.

Ale fresh the level pasture lay,
 And not a shadowe mote be seene,
 Save where full fyve good miles away,
 ‘The steeple towered from out the greene ;

And lo ! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the country side,
That Saturday at eventide.

The swanherds where their sedges are
Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
The shepherde lads I heard afarre,
And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth ;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came downe that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked uppe into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They sayde, " And why should this thing be ?
What danger lowers by land or sea ?
They ring the tune of Enderby ! "

" For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pyrate galleys warping down ;
For shippes ashore beyond the scorpe
They have not spared to wake the towne ;
But while the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pyrates flee,
Why ring ' The Brides of Enderby ? ' "

I looked without, and lo ! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main :
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
" Elizabeth ! Elizabeth ! "
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is downe,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place."
He shook as one that looks on death :
"God save you, mother!" straight he saith,
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good sonne, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long ;
And ere yon bells beganne to play,
Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, "Ho Enderby!"
They rang "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast,
For lo ! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped :
It swept with thunderous noises loud,
Shaped like a curling, snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

And rearing Lindis, backward pressed,
Shook all her trembling bankes amaine ;
Then madly at the eygre's breast
Flung uppe her weltering walls again.
Then bankes came down with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So farre, so fast the eygre drove,
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave,
Sobbed in the grasses at oure feet ;

The feet had hardly time to flee,
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the rooſe we ſate that night,
The noise of bells went ſweeping by ;
I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church-tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to ſee ;
And awſome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang “ Enderby.”

They rang the ſailor lads to guide
From rooſe to rooſe who fearleſſe rowed ;
And I—my ſonne was at my ſide,
And yet the ruddy beacon glowed ;
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
“ O come in life, or come in death !
O lost! my love, Elizabeth.”

And didſt thou viſit him no more ?
Thou didſt, thou didſt, my daughter deare ;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embracē,
The lifted ſun ſhone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place.

That flow ſtrewed wrecks about the grass,
That ebbe ſwept out the flockes to ſea ;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas !
To many more than myne and me :
But each will mourn his own (ſhe ſayth),
And ſweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my ſonne's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more,
By the reedy Lindis shore,
“Cusha ! Cusha !” calling,
Ere the early dews be falling ;
I shall never hear her song,
“Cusha ! Cusha !” all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
Goeth, floweth,
From the meads where melick growtheth,
When the water winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
Shiver, quiver ;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy, lonesome shore.
I shall never hear her calling,
“Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow,
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow,
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow ;
Come uppe, Lightfoot, rise and follow ;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From the clovers lift the head ;
Come uppe, Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking-shed.”

JEAN INGELOW.

FROM "THE DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN."

THEN I heard

A noise of some one coming thro' the lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird,
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams
divine :
All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves
The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went along
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : " Heaven heads the count of
crimes
With that wild oath." She rendered answer high :
" Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

" Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

" My God, my land, my father—these did move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of love
Down to a silent grave.

" And I went mourning, ' No fair Hebrew boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame among
The Hebrew mothers,'—emptied of all joy,
Leaving the dance and song,

" Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
Beneath the battled tower.

" The light white cloud swam over us. Anon,
We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
We saw the large white stars rise one by one,
Or, from the darken'd glen,

“Saw God divide the night with flying flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
A solemn scorn of ills.

“When the next moon was roll’d into the sky,
Strength came to me that equall’d my desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire !

“It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
That I subdued me to my father’s will ;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

“Moreover it is written that my race
Hew’d Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth.” Here her face
Glow’d, as I look’d at her.

She locked her lips : she left me where I stood :
“Glory to God,” she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood,
Toward the Morning Star.

A. TENNYSON.

THE SACRAMENTAL SABBATH.

'MID the folding mountains,
Old Kilcieran's lone kirkyard
Round its ruin'd chapel gathers,
Age by age, the grey hill fathers,
Underneath the heathery sward.

Centuries gone the saint from Erin,
Hither came on Christ's behest,
Taught and toiled, and when was ended
Life's long labour, here found rest ;
And all ages since have followed
To the ground his grave hath blessed.

Up the long glen narrowing
Inland from the eastern deep,
In the kirkyard o'er the river,
Where dead generations sleep,
Living men on summer Sabbaths
Worship long have loved to keep.

There o'er graves lean lichenèd crosses,
Placed long since by hands unknown ;
Sleeps the ancient warrior unaer
The blue claymore-sculptured stone,
And the holy well still trickles
From rock basin, grass o'ergrown.

Lulled the sea this Sabbath morning,
Calm the golden-misted glens,
And the white clouds upward passing
Leave unveiled the azure bens ;
Altars pure to lift to Heaven
Human hearts' unheard Amens.

And the folk are flowing
Both from near and far, enticed
By old wont and reverent feeling,
Here to keep the hallowed tryst,
This calm Sacramental Sabbath,
Far among the hills, with Christ.

Dwellers on this side the country
Take the shore-road, near their doors,
Poor blue-coated fishers, plaided
Crofters from the glens and moors,
Fathers, mothers, sons and daughters,
Hither trooping, threes and fours.

Plaids were there that only Sabbath
Saw, and wives' best tartan hoods,
Grannies' white coifs, and bareheaded
Maidens with their silken snoods ;
Many-hued home-woven tartans,
Brightening these grave solitudes.

You might see on old white horses
Aged farmers slowly ride,
With their wives behind them seated,
And the collie by their side ;
While the young folk follow after,
Son and daughter, groom and bride.

There a boat or two is coming,
From lone isle or headland o'er,
Many more, each following other,
Slowly pull along the shore,
Fore and aft, to gunwale freighted
With the old, the weak, the poor,

The bowed down, the lame, the palsied,
Those with panting breath oppress,
Widows poor, in murch and tartan
Cloak, for the day lent them, drest,
And the young and ruddy mother,
With the bairnie at her breast.

And the western shores Atlantic,
All the rough side of Kintyre,
Send small bands since morn, far travelled
O'er hill, river, moss, and mire,
Down the mountain's shoulders moving
Towards this haven of their desire.

Sends each glen and hidden corry,
As they pass, its little train.
To increase the throng that thickens
Kirkward, like the growing gain
From hill burns, which some vale-river
Broadening beareth to the main.

While the kirkyard throng and thronger
Growtheth, some their kindred greet ;
Others in lone nooks and corners
To some grass-grown grave retreat,
They heed not the living, busy
With the dead beneath their feet.

Here on green mound sits a widow,
Rocking crooningly to and fro
Over him with whom so gladly
To God's house she used to go ;
There the tears of wife and husband
Blend o'er a small grave below.

There you might o'erhear some old man,
Palsied, speaking to his son,
" See thou underneath this headstone
Make my bed when all is done,
There long since I laid my father,
There his forebears lie, each one."

* * * *

They too, meek and very lowly,
Souls bowed down with reverent fear,
This their first communion-day !
To the awful presence holy.
Dread it is to draw so near,
Pain it were to turn away.

So of old, the Hebrew maiden,
'Mid the Galilean mountains
Leaving all her childhood time,
With her kinsfolk, incense laden,
By Kedron's brook, Siloah's fountains,
Zion hill awe-struck would climb.

* * * *

Sweet the chime from ruined belfry
Stealeth ; at its peaceful call

Round the knoll whereon the preacher
Takes his stand, they gather all :
In whole families seated, o'er them
Hallowed stillness seems to fall.

There they sit, the men bareheaded
By their wives, in reverence meek
Many an eye to heaven is lifted,
Many lips, not heard to speak,
Mutely moving, on their worship
From on high a blessing seek.

Some on grey-mossed headstones seated,
Some on mounds of wild thyme balm,
Grave-browed men and tartaned matrons
Swell the mighty Celtic psalm,
On from glen to peak repeated,
Far into the mountain calm.

Then the aged pastor rose,
White with many a winter's snows
Fallen o'er his ample brows ;
And his voice of pleading prayer,
Cleaving slow the still blue air,
All his people's need laid bare.

Laden with o'erflowing feeling,
Then streamed on his fervid chaunt,
In the old Highland tongue appealing
To each soul's most hidden want,
With the life and deep soul-healing
He who died now lives to grant.

Slow the people round the table
Outspread, white as mountain sleet,

Gather, the blue heaven above them,
And their dead beneath their feet,
There in perfect reconcilement
Death and Life immortal meet.

Noiseless round that fair white table,
'Mid their father's tombstones spread,
Hoary-headed elders moving,
Bear the hallowed wine and bread ;
While devoutly still the people
Low in prayer bow down the head.

* * * *

And no sound was heard—save only,
Distance-lulled, the Atlantic roar,
Over the calm mountains coming
From far Machrhanish shore,
Like an audible eternity
Brooding the hushed people o'er.

Soon they go—but ere another
Day of hallowed bread and wine,
Some now here shall have ascended
To communion more divine,
Some have changed their old hill-dwellings,
Some have swept the tropic line.

J. C. SHARP.

THE MOORS.

O THE moors ! the moors ! the purple moors !
It's pleasant there to be,
O'er bowrie green dell, and breezy fell,
In day-long wandering free.

Ah ! wandering there, with forehead bare,
To meet the westlin' wind,
Coming up thro' the dells o' the heather bells
Frae the sea it has left behind.

To daunder wide, or on green hill side
To lie, nor count the time,
At ease to croon some auld wold tune,
And weave a sister rhyme.

While autumn showers skiff o'er the moors,
And blinks o' sunny sheen
On the purple tint of the heather glint,
Or the bright green sward between.

There scream of wheeling whaup by fits
From far and near is borne,
On mossy flowe the plover sits
And pipes her note forlorn.

The Covenanter's grave is there
With wild thyme overgrown,
And hallowed still are muir and hill
For that memorial stone.

There evermore, ye bees ! hum o'er
The peasant martyr's grave,
Thy wail be heard, lone plover bird !
O'er Scotland's holy brave.

J. C. SHAIRP.

MAGDALENE IN THE DESERT.

Say who that woman kneeling sole
Amid yon desert bare ?
The cold rain beats her bosom,
The night wind lifts her hair.
It is the holy Magdalene,
O listen to her prayer.

“ Lord, I have prayed since eventide,
And midnight now hath spread
Her mournful pall abroad o'er all,
The living and the dead.
The stars each moment shine more large,
Down-gazing from the skies—

“ O Father of the sorrowful,
Turn thus on me thine eyes ! ”
Hark, thunder shakes the cliff far off,
The woods in lightning glare !
The eagle shivers in her nest,
The lion in his lair ;

And yet, now trembling and now still,
She makes the self-sad prayer.
“ Lord of the sunshine and the storm !
The darkness and the day !
Why should I fear, if thou art near,
And thou art near alway !

“Thus in the wilderness thy Son
Was tempted, Lord, by Thee :
He triumphed in that awful strife,
O let Him plead for me !”

How often must that woman pray ?
How long kneel sighing there ?

Oh, joy to see the Holy Cross
Clasped to a breast so fair !
Speak louder, blessed Magdalene,
And let me join thy prayer.

“Lord, thou hast heard my plaints all night,
And now the airs of morn

“My forehead wan, my temples wan,
My face and bosom worn !
Oh, o'er my weak and 'wilder'd soul,
Make thus Thy Spirit move,
That I may feel the light once more,
And answer love with love !”

A. DE VERE.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :
My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
 May my soul follow soon !
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soiled and dark,
 To yonder shining ground ;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, Thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strews her lights below,
And deepens on and up ! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride !

A. TENNYSON.

THROUGH THE NIGHT.

THROUGH the night, through the night,
In the saddest unrest ;
Wrapt in white, all in white,
With her babe on her breast,
Walks the mother so pale,
Staring out on the gale,
Through the night.

Through the night, through the night,
Where the sea lifts the wreck,
Land in sight, close in sight !
On the surf-flooded deck
Stands the father so brave,
Drawing on to his grave,
Through the night.

R. H. STODDARD.

THE THUNDER-STORM.

(FROM THE GERMAN.)

GRANDFATHER, grandmother, mother, and child,
Close seated together, the time beguiled.
The child he played by his mother's knee,
The grandmother spinning so busily ;
While the aged man bent the stove behind,—
How heavy and thick blew the sultry wind !

Said the child, “ To-morrow's a holiday,
Then will I haste to the fields and play ;
Then will I pluck from the meadows green
The fairest flowers that were ever seen,
Ah ! in the woods there are joys untold,—
Hark ! did you hear how the thunder roll'd ? ”

Said the mother, “ To-morrow's a holiday,
Then will I walk in my best array ;
We will haste to the joyous feast again,
Life has much of pleasure, if much of pain ;
And the sun will shine like the living gold,—
Hark ! did you hear how the thunder roll'd ? ”

Said grandam, “ Ah ! 'tis a holiday,
But I have never the time to play ;
I cook the food, and I spin amain,
This life is trouble, and toil, and pain.

It may be well for the young and bold,—
Hark ! did you hear how the thunder roll'd ? ”

Said grandfather, “ Ay ! 'tis a holiday,
And these aged limbs may be lifeless clay ;
For I can jest and can sing no more,
Or work or toil as I did before ;
No place for me in the world, it seems,
Look ! do you see how the lightning gleams ? ”

They do not see, and they do not hear
How the cruel lightning is gleaming near ;
On grandfather, grandmother, mother, and child,
The bolt has fallen so fierce and wild :
Four lives are reft in one flash away,
And the morrow morn 'twas a holiday.

H.

IN A CORNFIELD.

(FOLKESTONE.)

WHERE the nodding grasses grow,
Nodding to the waves below—
Where the poppies, all aglow,
 Streak the rye—
 There I lie.
Western breezes wander by.

Western breezes rock the wheat,
Wanton with the clover sweet.
Summer joy would be complete,
 But that I,
 Look and sigh,
Missing thee among the rye !

Where the cliffs, with backward sway,
Show the morning on the bay,
Silver-drest for holiday—
 There I lie,
 Sea and sky

Locked together dreamily.

Banished memories arise,
Singing tender melodies,
Bring a mist before my eyes,
 Tread a measure,
 Through the leisure,
Is it pain, or is it pleasure ?

S. A. LEIFCHILD.

SAPPHO.

SHE lay among the myrtles on the cliff ;
Above her glared the noon ; beneath, the sea.
Upon the white horizon Atho's peak
Welter'd in burning haze ; all airs were dead ;
The cicale slept among the tamarisk's hair :
The birds sat dumb and drooping. Far below
The lazy sea-weed glistened in the sun ;
The lazy sea-fowl dried their steaming wings ;
The lazy swell crept whispering up the ledge
And sank again. Great Fan was laid to rest !
And Mother Earth watch'd by him as he slept,
And hush'd her myriad children for awhile.

She lay among the myrtles on the cliff,
And sigh'd for sleep, for sleep that would not hear,
But left her tossing still : for night and day
A mighty hunger yearned within her heart,
Till all her veins ran fever ; and her cheek,
Her long thin hands, and ivory channelled feet,
Were wasted with the wasting of her soul.
Then peevishly she flung her on her face,
And hid her eyeballs from the blinding glare,
And finger'd at the grass, and tried to cool
Her crisp hot lips against the crisp hot sward ;
And then she raised her head, and upward cast

Wild looks from homeless eyes, whose liquid light
Gleamed out between deep folds of blue-black hair,
As gleam twin lakes between the purple peaks
Of deep Parnassus, at the mournful moon.

Beside her lay her lyre. She snatch'd the shell,
And waked wild music from its silver strings ;
Then toss'd it sadly by, " Ah, hush ! " she cries,
" Dead offspring of the tortoise and the mine !
Why mock my discords with thine harmonies ?
Although a thrice-Olympian lot be thine,
Only to echo back in every tone
The moods of nobler natures than thine own."

* * * *

KINGSLEY.

THE WONDER-FLOWER.

ADOWN the mountain's castled side
The shining meads spread far and wide ;
There forth they crowd from town and tower
To seek the magic Wonder-flower ;
The simple blossoms, meek and sweet,
Of spring, they tread beneath their feet ;
And pass them with an eager mind,
Intent the Wonder-flower to find.
Who finds it in its sheeny pride,
Wins every blissful wish beside.
The maiden seeks, that she may know
The love that makes a heaven below,
The young man seeks, with joyful hope
That he may fill his soul's large scope.
The scholar seeks, with dreamy eyes,
That he to hidden lore may rise ;
The miser seeks, his painful store
Perchance to swell from more to more.
All seek, and seek till life grows grey,
But none hath found it to this day ;

Yet fondly-fashioned tales are told
Of those who sought and found of old,

In songs that ancient women weave
Youth's credulous ardour to deceive.

So forth the streams of children flow,
And forth the aged grey-beards go ;

And spurn the blossoms, meek and sweet,
Of spring, that bloom beneath their feet,

And pass them with an eager mind,
Intent the Wonder-flower to find.

Some homeward wander, dazed and dark,
Some on the mountain side lie stark ;

But none of all from town or tower,
E'er find the magic Wonder-flower.

CRADOCK NEWTON.

THE ISLAND CHURCH.

I.

POOR was the peasant, poor and heavy-hearted ;
Gone were his fields, his children, and his wife,
The kindly friends of other days departed,
The fine lights faded from the hills of life.

II.

Glad threads of speech, if rough, the labourers
mingle
By their own fires, where their own smoke-
wreaths curl ;
But Onni sat beside the stranger's ingle,
And steep'd in tears the scant bread of a churl.

III.

The young have hope : but on his head was shaken
The snow that summer sun shall never thaw ;
Yet bless'd are they whom Heaven hath undertaken
To chasten and to teach from out Gód's law.

IV.

O bread of God ! O fields for ever sunny !
O fadeless flowers upon life's craggiest shelves !
O better substance, more enduring money,
By grace laid up within our hearts themselves.

v.

Midsummer-day ! All night the child hath folden
Himself in expectation, heart and head,
Like a bee in some rich bell dusty-golden,
With long sleep pleasantly disquieted.

vi.

Midsummer-day ! All night the rivers going
By heath and holm triumphantly have slid,
All night a soft and silver overflowing
From joy expected bathed the sleeper's lid.

vii.

Midsummer-day ! At morn the maiden merry
Dons her green kirtle : in the hawthorn lane
The farmer's boy, beneath the rows of cherry,
Brings hampers full of flowers in the wain.

viii.

Midsummer-day ! The sad and wrinkled peasant
Smiles, as he stands erect upon the sod ;
“ In Holy Church to-day it will be pleasant
To taste the liberty of the sons of God.”

ix.

Midsummer-day ! They smother up the altar
With coronals, the richest of the year ;
The village choirs have practised well the psalter,
The grand old hymns to Finland ever dear.

x.

The feast of flowers ! The old priest has conn'd over
A bran-new homily—joyful, yet perplex'd—
Redolent of garden bloom and meadow clover ;
“ Behold the lilies ! ” is the good man's text.

XI.

The feast of flowers ! Sky, ocean, earth, seem
turning

All things to flowers. Midsummer winds expire
In perfumed music through the roses, burning
Like wreaths of red flame on the gilded wire.

XII.

Flowers in the churches ! Every birchen column
Blushes like dawn, or gleams as when it snows ;
Their sweet breath in the holy air is solemn,
Like warbled music when it comes and goes.

XIII.

Flowers on the window-sill, and in the chamber,
Flowers round the great stem of the village-tree,
And far away of infinite blue and amber
The rose of heaven, the violet of the sea.

XIV.

Speaks out the peasant Onni : " O my master !
But for a little while let me away.
Hark, through the woodland walks is rising faster
The voice of them that keep their holiday.

XV.

" All winter long, when the wild wind was grieving,
Thou know'st I drudged for thee in wet and
cold ;
All spring, when God's great sunshine was inweaving
Through forest-leaves his thousand nets of gold,

XVI.

“ I work’d thy flax ; and still the bounding river
Swept with his silver trumpets through the glade,
But my poor ear was sicken’d with the shiver
That the monotonous shuttle always made.

XVII.

“ Worse, worse than that ; for we our gathering
festal
Once in the twelvemonth only have down here,
But saints and angels, on the sea of crystal,
Their feast of flowers keep round the eternal year.

XVIII.

“ And much I dread, lest, when my dear Lord call
me,
The chants of Heaven sound strange within my
heart,
The low base influence of the earth enthral me,
Till I forget how I may bear my part.

XIX.

“ Yea, worse than all, six months how long and
dreary,
This starving soul of mine is unsufficed
With that sweet invitation to the weary,
The music of the promises of Christ.

XX.

“ O master !—let me call thee, O my brother !—
I pray thee by all prayers thy heart may search,
I pray thee by the days when with thy mother
Thou keep’st the feast, Oh, let me go to church !”

XXI.

But the churl pointed to the stream, where sombre
 A great white mist was creeping from the hill,
 Dulling the splendid laughters without number
 That twinkled on the water by the mill,

XXII.

And said with thick voice, eloquent of the flagon,
 “There lies thy way to church, thou preaching
 loon!
 Go in that boat alone, I have no waggon—
 Perhaps thy prayers to church will bring thee
 soon.”

XXIII.

And Onni heard speechless, and taking only
 The oar, full heavy for that wrinkled hand,
 A weak adventurer in his vessel lonely,
 Pray’d inly, “God of ocean and of land !

XXIV.

“Sweetly and strongly at Thy will far-bringing
 All fins in waves, all plumes upon the breeze,
 Beautiful birds to western forest winging,
 And whatso passeth through the paths of seas,

XXV.

“Me, of more value, with my soul immortal,
 Mine infinite futurity, than they,
 Me, a wing’d voyager to Thy starry portal,
 Lead, loving Father! to Thy church to-day.”

XXVI.

Wearily, wearily drags the oar, and slowly,
Like a man blinded by the snow athwart
His smarting eyelids, trails the boat, and wholly
Lost in the fog, the rower loses heart.

XXVII.

And ding dong, ding dong, ding dong, in the
distance,
The church bells sounded over holt and hill.
He dropp'd his oars, and, weary of resistance,
Let the strong river bear him at its will,

XXVIII.

Until at last the bark's keel sharply grated
Upon the white sand of a little isle ;
Then ding dong, ding dong, to the man belated,
The bells first clash'd, then ceased a little while.

XXIX.

White clung the colourless mist, on the island forest,
Unbeautifying its green depths and fells ;
Sad were his thoughts, but just when grief was
sorest,
A silver music changed upon the bells.

XXX.

Then the mist thinn'd; the lustrous sky, from off it
Sweeping one cloud, left interspace of blue,
One isle of summer-light, one voiceless prophet
Of sunny touches that make all things new;

XXXI.

And kenn'd beyond the furthest intervening
 Of dark green hall, and sombre colonnade
 The northern river far away was sheening
 Like the dark blue of some Damascan blade.

XXXII.

“ Ah, in the church are psalms divinely tender”—
 Yet here is music too, not earthly born,
 Dropped downward by the skylarks as they render
 Some air heard up beside the gates of morn.

XXXIII.

And in the woodland depths, with restless shiver,
 From branch to branch the countless wild birds
 sing ;
 So the swift bow of a musician ever
 Flits with the melody from string to string.

XXXIV.

“ Ah, in the church the flowers are surely glorious,
 And the old pillars look full bright and brave ;
 And the great organ, trembling yet victorious,
 Keeps quivering on like light upon the wave.

XXXV.

“ And better still, the good Priest of Christ's merits
 Speaks to believing hearts, right glad yet awed,
 And launches sinful yet forgiven spirits
 On that great deep, the promises of God ;—

XXXVI.

“Whilst I, far off from church, like one in blindness
Groping, lose sacrament and pastoral tone.
The Lord commandeth not His loving-kindness,
I am cast out from His pavilion.”

XXXVII.

Yet here are flowers, and light, and voices mystic—
Were never such since when, as Scripture tells
The High Priest in the Holiest moved majestic
With gems oraculous and with golden bells.

XXXVIII.

And here are pillared pines, like columns soaring,
With branches tall, that like triforiums are,
And a soft liturgy of winds adoring,
With echoes from some temple-gate ajar.

XXXIX.

And that no consecration may be wanted,
One gently passes through the haunted place—
Not like Him on the crucifixes painted,
With white, cold, aged, agonizing face,—

XL.

Not crown'd with thorns, and ever bleeding
bleeding,
Stains on that rigid form more dark than wine—
Not dead, but living, beautiful exceeding,
Divinely human, humanly Divine.

XL.I.

And Onni prays the prayer that knows no measure
 By bead, or clock, or count of regular chime—
 The prayer which is the fulness of all pleasure,
 In words unutter'd, and transcending time.

XL.II.

His worship ended, Nature sang no longer,
 But grown contemplative was silent too ;
 And now made gladder, calmer, holier, stronger,
 He raised his voice, and bade his soft adieu.

XL.III.

“ O, fellow-worshippers with me and Nature,
 Who sang God's praises with my soul forlorn,
 Wild flower, and forest tree, and wingèd creature,
 And all the sunny sanctities of morn,—

XL.IV.

“ River, whom God hath taught to be my pilot,
 Needles of light that dart through larch and birch,
 Ripples that were the music of mine islet,
 And pines that were the pillars of my church,—

XL.V.

“ Peace, and Farewell.” Then happier and faster
 He glided homeward down the watery way,
 And, with a gentle smile, said, “ Thank you, master.
 I was at church, I kept my feast to-day.”

W. DERRY AND RAPHOE.

STRIVING TO ATONE.

HE left a happy fireside :
His parents' hearts were proud ;
For what of evil could betide,
Even in the city's crowd,
The child whom prayers had follow'd—
As shadow follows cloud ?

He fell : companions round him
Their specious lures did weave :
In the distant Bush he tries with pain
His error to retrieve :
Alone, within their cottage home,
His parents sit and grieve.

Their heads are bent so lowly,
Their hearts beat high no more ;
Their only wish to hide their shame
Far from their cottage door :
He vows to make a home for them
On far Australia's shore.

He works—none could work harder—
He counts the months and days,—
Till from his well-won wages
He such a sum may raise,
As pay their passage out to him,
To try new work—new ways.

At last, at last, the sum is won !
 With victory in his eye,
 He mounts his horse and gallops on,
 Until he comes anigh
 A little station-house, whereat
 The letters often lie.

He slackens pace to calm his breast,
 To ask if there may be
 Some word for him.—'Twas needless care ;
 For quick espied is he,
 And in his hand a letter put,
 Dismayed him utterly.

His parents dead : he all but faints,
 And turns once more away ;
 Leaving the maid to wonder how
 He had no word to say ;—
 To fancy 'twas a lover's death
 Distressed him so that day.

He turned and wept, and hastened home,
 Anew to strive and plan ;
 But ever with a saddened look
 Bespoke a broken man,
 Who does his work in sheer despite,
 But doth not all he can.

Ere many years the answer came
 To these fond parents' prayers :
 He found the Way, the Peace, the Life
 That waiteth, unawares,
 For those whose hearts are humbled low—
 All overcome with cares.

H. A. PAGE.

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